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5/02

More Defense

Nebraska's second victory follows similar pattern



Brian Hill

THE MAIN PLOT was basically the same.

The defense allows an early score and then pitches a shutout the rest of the way, causing turnovers and setting up scoring opportunities for an offense that moves the football and eats up the clock but has trouble cashing in on its opportunities.

After allowing 145 yards in the first quarter, Nebraska's defense gave up just 7 yards in the second period and 93 the rest of the game, 50 of which came on Utah State's game-ending drive. Last week, Oklahoma State gained just 57 of 183 yards in the second half.

Utah State quarterback Jason Cox completed 13 of 15 passes for 132 yards in the first quarter. But Cox went 4-of-18 the rest of the way, as Demorrio Williams and his Blackshirt teammates took over.

"We had to see what they came out and did," defensive coordinator Bo Pelini said. "Once we saw that, we made our adjustments. We settled down and played good football."

Williams, who hounded Oklahoma State's Josh Fields a week earlier, forced two straight fumbles by Cox, and the Huskers converted both into points.

The Huskers now have forced eight turnovers in two games. After scoring 14 points off of turnovers in the opener, NU scored nine points off of three Utah State turnovers.

And the third quarter has been a good one for the slow-starting Huskers both games. Nebraska has outscored its first

two opponents 27-0 in the third period. That's a change from last year, when NU was outscored 110-97 in the third quarter.

While Williams played a major role for the second straight game, a couple of players who were just starting their senior seasons in high school a year ago at this time were involved in the subplots.

Joe Dailey, a heralded quarterback from Jersey City, N.J., and David Dyches, a place-kicker from Spring, Texas, made their Nebraska debuts on a warm September afternoon.

Dailey rushed for 47 yards and completed four of five passes for another 47 yards in a relief role. Dyches, given a chance to win the kicking job, made all four of his field goal attempts.

You can read about Nebraska's 31-7 victory over Utah State in this edition of *Huskers Illustrated*, and there's much, much more.

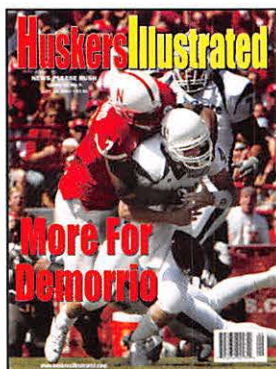
Contributing editor Mike Babcock has a look at Nebraska's "big guys" and their problems finding clothes. Items like size-19 shoes and 54-long sport coats aren't readily avail-

able. Titus Adams, a versatile member of the Nebraska defense, is the subject of our player profile.

Some of the luster was taken off this week's rematch with Penn State when the Nittany Lions were knocked off by Boston College 27-14 at home and fell to 1-1. Penn State had been ranked No. 25 in the coaches' poll, one spot below Nebraska.

The Huskers, unranked in the preseason for the first time since 1969, edged back into the national polls after the Oklahoma State victory. Though never one to put much stock in rankings, Coach Frank Solich was pleased with Nebraska's return.

"I think it is good for the program to get off to a good start and be back in the Top 25," he said at his weekly teleconference. "We still have a lot of challenges ahead of us, but our players want to get better." ■



ON THE COVER

Weakside linebacker Demorrio Williams sacks Utah State quarterback Travis Cox, forcing a fumble, which Williams recovered to set up a touchdown. Photo by Scott Bruhn.

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**EDITOR,
GENERAL MANAGER**
Brian Hill

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR
Mike Babcock

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
Terry Douglass, Doug Horwich,
Curt McKeever, Todd Henrichs,
Rick Shaw, Nebraska Sports
Information

**CONTRIBUTING
PHOTOGRAPHERS**
Scott Bruhn,
Nebraska Sports Information

**SPORTS MARKETING
& ADVERTISING DIRECTOR**
Jeff Tuder
(402) 423-3405

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HI Online
www.huskersillustrated.com

E-Mail Addresses

Editorial: hieditor@aol.com
Advertising: jefftuder@atttel.net

Huskers Illustrated

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Guard Jemayel Phillips (above) and other Nebraska linemen find their wardrobes often are limited by what is available for men their size. *By Mike Babcock*

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Ahead of His Time

When Bob Brown spoke, teammates listened. He was a "very imposing guy," Coach Frank Solich says, recalling Nebraska's first football All-American in the Bob Devaney era.

Solich was a sophomore when Brown was a senior and recalls, "vividly," his leading the team in calisthenics. With him out in front, "most people paid attention," says Solich.

Brown was something of an anomaly in the early 1960s. At 6-foot-5 and 259 pounds, he was big for an offensive lineman — he played guard after beginning as a tackle — and he could run.

"He had great speed, great athletic ability," Solich says.

Because of his speed and athletic ability, he also played linebacker on defense. Devaney called Brown the best two-way player he ever coached, and there was no basis for disagreement.

Even so, Devaney and Brown didn't hit it off immediately. Brown was among the many talented players left over from the previous coaching staff, headed up by the ill-fated Bill Jennings, but he finished his first spring under Devaney third on the depth chart at one of the tackle positions.

John Bentley wrote in the 1962 media guide that Brown's potential was "still unused." He was a "good blocker," Bentley continued, but "average defensively."

Even so, Brown had logged 257 minutes in 1961, eighth most on the team.

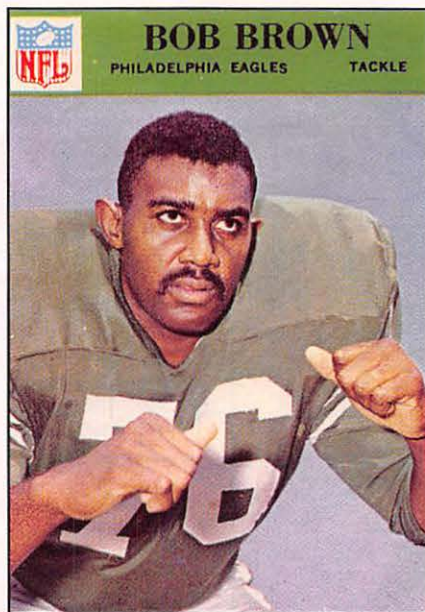
At one point early on, Devaney reportedly told Brown to check in his uniform. The problem, Devaney claimed in his 1981 autobiography, was that Brown could be an indifferent practice player.

"He could make a crisis out of a minor bruise," Devaney wrote.

A popular story involved an afternoon when Devaney found Brown in the training room getting taped before a practice, convinced he couldn't go. Devaney suggested Brown suit up anyway.

When they were on the practice field, Devaney pointed out a well-dressed visitor, whom he described as a scout for the Philadelphia Eagles. The scout was there to watch Brown in particular, he said.

Remarkably, Brown decided that



Bob Brown was a first-round draft pick of the Philadelphia Eagles (1964), where he played his first five seasons.

perhaps he could practice, and he went about it enthusiastically. Turns out, the visitor wasn't a scout for the Eagles. He wasn't a scout at all.

The story might not have happened the way Devaney told it. But even if it didn't happen, it expressed a truth about Brown. When he was motivated, there wasn't a better player. By the end of Brown's junior year, he had earned Devaney's respect, a fact reflected in such stories.

When Nebraska traveled to Colorado in 1962, his first visit to Folsom Field, Brown wanted to determine whether the altitude would be a factor so he tried to sprint from one end zone to the other during the Cornhuskers' walk-through on the day before the game, collapsing before he finished.

Brown took that as irrefutable evidence of the effects of the altitude. Devaney said it was because Brown had never tried to sprint 100 yards before. Altitude had nothing to do with it.

George Sullivan, a trainer and "physio-therapist" (according to the media guide), doesn't recall the incident. But the story illustrates Devaney's respect for Brown. As Charlie McBride used to tell players he singled out for criticism, "Be concerned

when I'm not getting on you."

(Those might not have been the exact words McBride used, but you get the drift.)

Brown could have played for McBride, or for Bo Pelini, or for Barney Cotton. In addition to his speed and athleticism, he possessed exceptional strength, built in what passed as a weight room in the north field house. He lifted weights, fashioned by a member of the support staff, when few others did.

"He really could match up with what is there today," says Solich. "If you took him and fit him into a group (now), he would match up, which wasn't the case for all linemen back in those days."

During Brown's time, Nebraska had offensive linemen who weighed barely 200 pounds, and 230 pounds was considered decent size for a tackle — typically the biggest of the linemen.

Brown, who weighed 280 when he finished, was the Big Eight "Lineman of the Year" in 1963 and the national "Lineman of the Year" according to the Pigskin Club of Washington, D.C.

He also was a solid student, completing an undergraduate degree before leaving Nebraska and starting work on a master's degree before beginning a 10-year NFL career.

He was the No. 1 draft pick of, appropriately enough, the NFL's Eagles as well as the AFL's Denver Broncos, signing with the former and also playing for the Rams and Raiders. He was an all-league choice seven times and a Pro Bowl selection six times. He dominated the line of scrimmage in the NFL as he had dominated it at Nebraska.

The seniors committee has nominated Brown for election into the Pro Football Hall of Fame, joining Bob Hayes and 13 modern-era candidates on this year's ballot.

The class of 2004 will be chosen on the day before the Super Bowl in Houston.

Currently, only two former Cornhuskers, Guy Chamberlin and William (Roy) Lyman, are enshrined in Canton, Ohio, not far from where Brown went to high school, in Cleveland.

Brown deserves to be the third, with Mick Tingelhoff and Pat Fischer close behind. ■

NORMAL BACKER

Middle linebacker Barrett Ruud is comfortable in defensive coordinator Bo Pelini's system. "Basically, you get to be a normal linebacker," the junior from Lincoln says.

In the past, the middle linebacker has set up closer to the line of scrimmage, in a "bubble" defense. A "bubble" linebacker is "about 2 yards from the line of scrimmage," says Coach Frank Solich. "You get him in an area where he's not a true linebacker and he's not a true down lineman."

"It might be confusing to the opponent. You hope so. The (blocking) angles are different. But it's not good if it's confusing to you. It's obvious that Barrett likes to be backed off as a backer."

Ruud, the Cornhuskers' second-leading tackler last season, found himself in a kind of no-man's land in the old alignment. "It was hard to play the run, and it was hard to play the pass," he says.

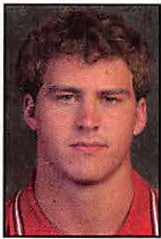
Now "you can read things a lot quicker. I like it a lot better."

He is a little lighter than he was last season, about 236 pounds compared to 242 a year ago. "I lost a lot of body fat," he says. "The key to this defense is, you've got to be able to run."

So "I'm trying to get as light as I can but still have a lot of strength."

That's the trend, Ruud says. "Just talking to guys that have played in the NFL, they say that no linebacker is 240 in the NFL now. Everybody's light. They all can run."

Pelini, who spent the last nine seasons in the NFL coaching linebackers, has been impressed with Ruud. "I think he's going to be a leader for us," says Pelini. "I expect big things out of him over the next two years. He's just going to keep getting better the longer he's in this system."



Barrett Ruud

PLAYERS' CHOICE

Solich picked Bryan Bailey as the football team's strength and conditioning coach, following Boyd Epley's move to working with facilities. But he did so only after considering the players.

They were "in unison in Bailey being the guy," says Solich. "They appreciate what he is all about. He is like a position coach. He didn't want excuses. All he wants is results."

Bailey has been involved, literally. "He generally doesn't ask any of those guys to do anything he can't do, except maybe bench press an awful lot of weight," Solich says. "In terms of running, stretching and doing the things that are very demanding to these players, he's right there with them." ■

Quick Hits

What's Happening In Nebraska Athletics?

TIME FOR OTHER THINGS

Giving up duties as offensive coordinator was difficult, but Coach Frank Solich is adjusting.

"I've found I have more time to do a number of things that I think head coaches do around the country," he says. I feel grateful for that time. I am still meddling in what we are doing offensively and, to a degree, defensively, but not to the point where any coordinator would worry about interference.

"They got hired to do a job. They'll do the job, but I'll be a small part of it."

ANOTHER DAY IN PARADISE

Offensive guard Jake Andersen doesn't watch a "whole lot" of reality-based television programs. But one he does, when he has the time, is "Paradise Hotel" on the Fox network.

Single men and women live together "in the most exclusive resort ever created," according to publicity for the prime-time series on Monday and Wednesday nights.

Each week, one of the contestants is eliminated.

Mike Erickson, another offensive guard, also is "kind of caught up" in watching the series, according to Andersen. "He usually comes over and we watch it. I don't know why we started watching," says Andersen. "It's just a typical reality show. My girlfriend likes it, too."

During preseason camp, his girlfriend would videotape episodes. Often, her taste in television runs contrary to his, however, Andersen says. "Sometimes, she picks stuff like Fried Green Tomatoes."

Fried Green Tomatoes is a 1991 motion picture starring Kathy Bates and Mary Stuart Masterson.

SPUR OF THE MOMENT

Ira Cooper had a different look during preseason camp, a shaved head. The junior Buck linebacker wasn't coerced into it, however. "It was spur of the moment," he says. "I was about to fall asleep one night and decided to cut my hair all off. So I got up and started cutting it."

Some players have a problem with skin irritation because of rubbing by the inside of the helmet. Not so for Cooper. "I kind of like it like this," he says. "I've got good feedback on it. I'll probably keep it like this because in a couple of years, I'll start losing my hair on top anyway. So I might as well."

TEXAS CONNECTION

Several players and coaches enthusiastically greeted former Cornhusker Broderick Thomas when he showed up following practice one afternoon during preseason camp. Senior weakside linebacker Demorrio Williams was among them, even though he doesn't know Thomas all that well.

The two met for the first time last season, at the Texas A&M game in College Station. "When I met him, I felt like we'd been hanging out with each other for a while," says Williams.

"It's just something about Texas people. I feel like whenever we run into each other, we already know each other. It was like that with Keyuo (Craver), too. We just kind of hit it off right."

Williams is from Beckville, Texas, by way of Kilgore Junior College.

Thomas is from Houston, Craver from Harleton, Texas.

MAKES IT LOOK EASY

Sophomore tight end Matt Herian has been compared to a Denny's Restaurant, always open. But there's more to his success than a knack for getting open.

"He makes the toughest catches look so simple," says wide receiver Ross Pilkington. "He'll make the catch on the deep ball, the short ball, anything, with a guy in his face."

"He's smooth. It doesn't even look like he's trying."

Herian also is "humble," Pilkington says. "He just wants to play the game. He doesn't care what goes on outside or what newspaper's got his picture on the front. He just loves the game."

HE'S BACK

After finishing spring practice at fourth on the depth chart, Garth Glissman announced he would be transferring to Hutchinson, Kan., Community College. When the entire team reported for practice on the first day of classes, however, the walk-on from Waverly, Neb., had returned.

Glissman participated in preseason practices with the Hutchinson team but decided he would be happier at Nebraska. "He's always been a great-attitude guy," says Solich.

"So we're glad to have him back."

Originally, the 6-foot-6 Glissman walked on with the Cornhusker basketball team before turning his attention to football. His ability as a passer will help on the scout team. ■

Earning It, Keeping It

Defensive players with Blackshirts will have to work hard to keep them



Mike BABCOCK

DURING NEBRASKA'S weekly teleconference on the Tuesday before the Oklahoma State game, defensive coordinator Bo Pelini was asked when he would hand out Blackshirts. "I'm not real concerned with that right now," he replied. "We have a plan. We'll see what happens in the future."

Had he established a timetable for distributing them? "Yes," he said.

He anticipated the next question and answered before it could be asked.

"No," he said, he would not reveal the timetable.

His exchange with the questioner elicited laughter.

The next day, Pelini handed out the coveted black jerseys before practice, to 11 players, including three who were receiving them for the first time. A 12th Blackshirt was on its way.

Lornell McPherson's No. 1 black jersey hadn't been ready. But "Lornell is the starting nickel back and he will be a Blackshirt," said Pelini. "Right now, we consider Lornell a starter."

The "right now" was significant. Just because McPherson had a Blackshirt prior to the first game didn't mean he would automatically have one for the second or the third. And the same thing applied to the other 11, including the first-timers: Benard Thomas, Le Kevin Smith and Josh Bullocks.

"Just because you've earned one now doesn't mean you're going to stay in one, and just because you don't have one now doesn't mean you can't get one," Pelini said after that Wednesday's practice.

"It's about earning it and not only earning it but keeping it."

That was always implied when Blackshirts were distributed. But it was rarely if ever the case in recent seasons.

Once a player earned a Blackshirt, he kept it until season's end.

"You always knew it was going to stay," said nose tackle Ryon Bingham.

He wore a Blackshirt last season, as did Trevor Johnson, Demorrio Williams, T.J. Hollowell, Barrett Ruud, Philip Bland, Fabian Washington and Pat Ricketts, this year's first to get them.

Whether or not they will keep the jerseys depends on their performance.

"I agree with that totally," Ruud said. "That's how it should be."

Ricketts might have lost his Blackshirt last season after losing his starting job at left cornerback to Washington. But he was still regarded as a starter in another defensive package. That probably wouldn't happen now. "After this week, you could be interviewing somebody else," he said.

The possibility of losing a Blackshirt can be an effective motivational tool. "It definitely allows for everybody to work harder, each practice, each day," said Ricketts.

It also is grounded in the tradition, which began in the mid-1960s. The original black pullovers were distributed each day before practice and collected afterward to be washed.

That a poor practice could cost a player his Blackshirt might seem extreme now. But that's how it was done then, keeping in mind it didn't carry nearly 40 years of tradition either.

Pelini proceeded carefully, as someone not familiar with a tradition should. He wasn't compelled to continue with the Blackshirts. "I don't think I was obliged to do it," he said.



Bo Pelini distributed the jerseys without a lot of ceremony.

"It's just something that's gone on here for a long time. I understand the concept. It's a tradition here that the players felt strongly of, so obviously we stayed with it."

Pelini distributed the jerseys without the ceremony that attended last season's distribution. "I congratulated the guys that got them and said it was an on-going process," he said.

He also made it clear that the Blackshirts were symbolic of the entire defense, not just those who wear them. "We've stressed that from day one," he said. "I don't think it's an issue with these guys."

"We've never separated anybody from the group, and we never will. They understand that. There's no difference between guys that are Blackshirts and guys that aren't Blackshirts. They're all treated the same. It's just that some

guys are going to be out there on that first snap and some guys aren't.

"There are a lot of guys that aren't in Blackshirts that are going to play significant roles."

In that sense, "I think every guy deserves a Blackshirt because they've all put in the same exact amount of time and hard work and effort as the top guys on the unit," said Ricketts.

"We really don't need these to pull anybody apart, to make anybody feel more special than the next person. I think that's what he (Pelini) was hitting home with. And I totally agree. It doesn't matter what color shirts we're wearing. We're going to go out and play Blackshirt-style defense."

That doesn't diminish the emotion associated with receiving a Blackshirt.

"Even though I got one last season, it's like a renewing feeling," Bingham said. ■

Mike Babcock is a former sports columnist for the Lincoln Journal Star. He has covered Nebraska football for more than 20 years. Mike can be reached at MBABCOCK1@neb.rr.com or P.O. Box 6782, Lincoln, NE 68506.

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Scaled-Back Approach

New offensive coordinator Cotton in front of the line praising the defense



Curt McKEEVER

BARNEY COTTON LOOKED surprisingly comfortable after watching his offense produce but one sustained drive for points in Nebraska's season-opening, 17-7 win against Oklahoma State.

No, he was hardly excited over the fact the Huskers managed just a field goal on three first-half trips inside the OSU 20-yard line.

"To be honest, when you get down in the red zone three times, you better come away with more than three points," NU's first-year offensive coordinator said. "We won't win many games like that."

Cotton also knew, however, that he had called upon approximately 30 percent of the Huskers' playbook. And that even with the scaled-back approach, Nebraska produced 346 yards and a better-time-of-possession edge than during any of its contests in the 2002 season.

Despite calling "three or four" different plays in the game's latter stages, NU picked up four of its 19 first downs in the fourth quarter, and ran out the final 3:30.

But enough patting his boys on the back.

"The reason we won the game," Cotton said, "was because our defense played so well."

And with that, he sent a tip of his straw hat toward Bo Pelini, the Huskers' first-year defensive coordinator.

"I hugged him and told him I loved him," Cotton said after Pelini's bunch rescued the NU offense from its wheel spin.

After one game at NU, Pelini became the toast of Huskerville.

The plan he devised against Oklahoma State, which has as much offensive play-making talent as any team that will enter Memorial Stadium this season, was executed to near perfection.

After driving 52 yards for a touchdown on their first possession, the quick-draw Cowboys spent the rest of the afternoon shooting blanks.

Junior quarterback Josh Fields, who came in regarded as the top returning signal caller in the Big 12, left with his lowest passing total (97 yards) as a starter.

That happened in large part to the punches pulled by Pelini.

If he wasn't moving weakside linebacker Demorrio Williams up to play defensive end in nickel situation, he was mixing in man-to-man coverages with zone looks at a rate that left Fields dizzy.

"The players are the same," OSU's All-America wide receiver Rashaun Woods said of the Huskers. But "their schemes are different."

Woods didn't like them, either.

Last year, left one-on-one against the secondary, he torched the Huskers with 11 receptions, 134 yards and a

touchdown to fuel the Cowboys to a 24-21 win. Woods found paydirt again this time, making a 4-yard grab just in front of NU cornerback Pat Ricketts. But thereafter, he was limited to three catches for 15 yards.

Even Pelini, a tough guy from Youngstown, Ohio, shook his head at that stat.

"I've been away from college ball for so long, I wasn't sure how we would stack up," Pelini admitted. "We made some right calls . . . other times, guys just made plays. It's a credit to what they've learned."

If Oklahoma State coach Les Miles were grading the Huskers' defense, he'd have been doling out extra credit.

"Their game plan absolutely changes our play calling," Miles said. "You have to think more about calling plays when your quarterback is getting that much pressure put on him."

Miles sounded more astonished by the sound technique

Pelini had his bunch playing.

"They got a lot in," he added.

What the Blackshirts took back with their dominant performance, and what they woefully lacked as the 2002 season wound down with three losses in the final four games, was a confident strut.

Although wary that the Cowboys could change the game's tone with one big play to Woods or 1,000-yard rusher Tatum Bell, Pelini's group never flinched.

"No one panicked, and everyone responded the way I thought they would," said Pelini.

The night before the contest, Pelini, playing prophet, had reminded his group how it would have to stay after it if Oklahoma State came out and "hit them in the face" with an opening-drive TD.

"We weren't scared," middle linebacker Barrett Ruud said. "They'd line up, and we said, 'We're going to do this.'"

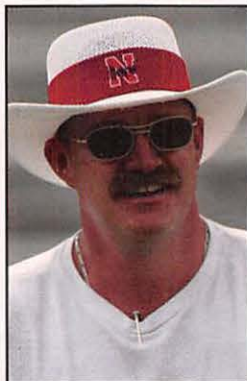
Southern California coach Pete Carroll knows where Ruud's coming from — he hired the unassuming man behind the Huskers' defense when he was head coach for the New England Patriots, and also served on a staff with him in San Francisco.

"They'll be so much better than they were before, you won't believe it," Carroll said of Pelini. "He'll do all the right things."

Pelini was so on with his calls that after Oklahoma State's third series, which ended with a blocked field goal, the Cowboys made it into Husker territory on just one other drive.

"We're going to keep setting the bar higher," Pelini said. "Our defensive players, they're men of great character, and they'll keep raising it."

Is it any wonder Cotton seems so comfortable? ■



Barney Cotton said NU used about 30 percent of its playbook.

Curt McKeever is a sportswriter, covering the University of Nebraska for the Lincoln Journal Star. In addition to reporting on football he is the primary beat writer for the men's basketball and baseball teams.

Long Time Coming

Former players enjoy reminiscing at Husker Nation celebration



Terry DOUGLASS

IT WAS AN OPPORTUNITY that most Nebraska football fans could only dream about.

There I was in the Lied Center lobby, milling about with hundreds of former Nebraska lettermen as they gathered to march down Stadium Drive. I couldn't have thrown my notebook and pen without hitting a Husker hero.

On the steps surveying the scene was Heisman Trophy winner Eric Crouch, joking with some of his former offensive linemen. He was no doubt recalling all the pancakes they'd made in front of him. Across the way, Jeff Kinney was shaking hands and renewing old acquaintances, while Vince Ferragamo was doing the same around the corner.

Just standing in the middle of the room, reading the names on the backs of the jerseys was like taking a walk down memory lane, listening to all those games on the radio while working cattle or hunting back on my family's ranch in the Sandhills. It was supposedly a media event, but it was difficult not to feel like a fan, surrounded by so many heroes of your youth.

You see Tom Sorley and remember exactly where you were when he threw a touchdown pass to Tim Smith, giving Nebraska a 7-0 lead over Oklahoma in the 1979 Orange Bowl. Wait, there's Mike Knox. Remember some of the hits he used to make?

TV cameras surround center Dave Rimington, who could snap the ball like lightning and always was seemingly three yards down the field making a block before the defense even started to react. The former Outland Trophy winner easily had the best quote of the day, telling a reporter that after last year's 7-7 season, the "N" on Nebraska's helmets stands for "Never again."

Some of the guys looked like they could still play a little. Others, well, let's just say they might need to go through a few weeks of two-a-days. Still, they all looked like All-Americans in their new scarlet and cream jerseys.

The event was the brainchild of new Nebraska Athletic Director Steve Pederson, who has been calling for the Husker Nation to come together since his return to Lincoln last December. And come together they did. More than 800 former NU football lettermen were true to their school and migrated back to Memorial Stadium for the season opener against Oklahoma State, coming from 40 different states. It was an idea that was well received by the ex-Huskies — and a long time coming, according to Heisman winner Johnny Rodgers.

"I've always been really upset with Nebraska because when I go to Texas, Miami, Notre Dame and USC, they've got a serious network of former players, and everybody knows each other, and they're always coming back and everything," Rodgers said. "This is the first time that we've really had an opportunity to meet with all the guys who made it possible for us to even be here."

Among the 800 lettermen were 41 All-Americans and 38 academic All-Americans — 10 of them now doctors. Every class was represented dating back to 1934, and players from all 41 of Nebraska's bowl teams and its five national championship squads attended.

Surely, some very good stories were exchanged. Jim Scott, a starting center in the early 1990s for the Huskers, said there were plenty of debates raging at a Friday night reunion party at the Champions Club — none of which will ever be settled.

"All I know is that all of us have sure gotten a lot better in the past 10 years," Scott said, smiling. "It was really a lot of fun."

Said Rodgers: "It's been an amazing weekend. I've seen people I haven't seen since I played, and I've seen people that I grew up with but don't see very often. It really has been great."

The highlight of the weekend came just prior to kickoff when the army of former players streamed into Memorial Stadium, led by Hall of Fame Coach Tom Osborne and Mike Devaney, the son of former NU coaching great Bob Devaney. The players surrounded the field and cheered the current Huskers as they ran out of the tunnel. The Big Red alumni then rushed to the sideline to shake hands and offer encouragement to Coach Frank Solich's players.

It was an impressive sight and fired up a Nebraska team that was about to tee it up with highly touted Oklahoma State. For middle linebacker Barrett Ruud, whose father, two uncles and grandfather all played at Nebraska, the gesture took on added significance.

"I didn't know what the whole Husker Nation thing was going to be like, but I saw these old dudes kind of going nuts, and I loved it," Ruud said. "I got so hyped up about that I kind of forgot what I was supposed to do for a quarter before I settled down."

I-back Josh Davis, whose father "Tough" Tony Davis played for Nebraska from 1973-75, said the entire team got a charge from the spectacle.

"It was great. You were seeing players from every decade, and they were out there cheering you on and telling you, 'let's go' and 'play hard,'" Davis said. "It was just something that got us real excited."

There was certainly plenty of extra energy floating around. Rodgers, for one, would love to see the Husker Nation celebration become an annual event.

"I'm excited about putting us all together and what it means and what I would like it to mean," Rodgers said. "We're going to try to do this every year, not just once every 30 or 40 years. We want to have everybody back for the opener every year, and we'll try to kick the season off with the right energy and in the right direction." ■



Tom Osborne leads the group of former players at the opener.

Terry Douglass is the sports editor of the Grand Island Independent. He can be reached at tdbbdouglass@earthlink.net.

Late Bloomer

***Husker Adams
undeterred by
first encounter
with football***

A good indication of Titus Adams' status on the football team was the fact that he didn't have a helmet of his own. He had to share one with a teammate.

Adams was 10-years-old, on a youth-league team for 14- and 15-year-olds. His older brother Jerry was a member of the team, and Titus wanted to tag along.

He would have played with his own age group, but he was too big.

Titus practiced with the team, taking his turn with a borrowed helmet. And when he didn't have a helmet, he would "just run around. I was happy to be out there, to go to practice," he says.

He enjoyed it not only because he was with his brother but also because the team included kids in his neighborhood. Plus, he had shoulder pads, hip pads, "everything except a helmet."

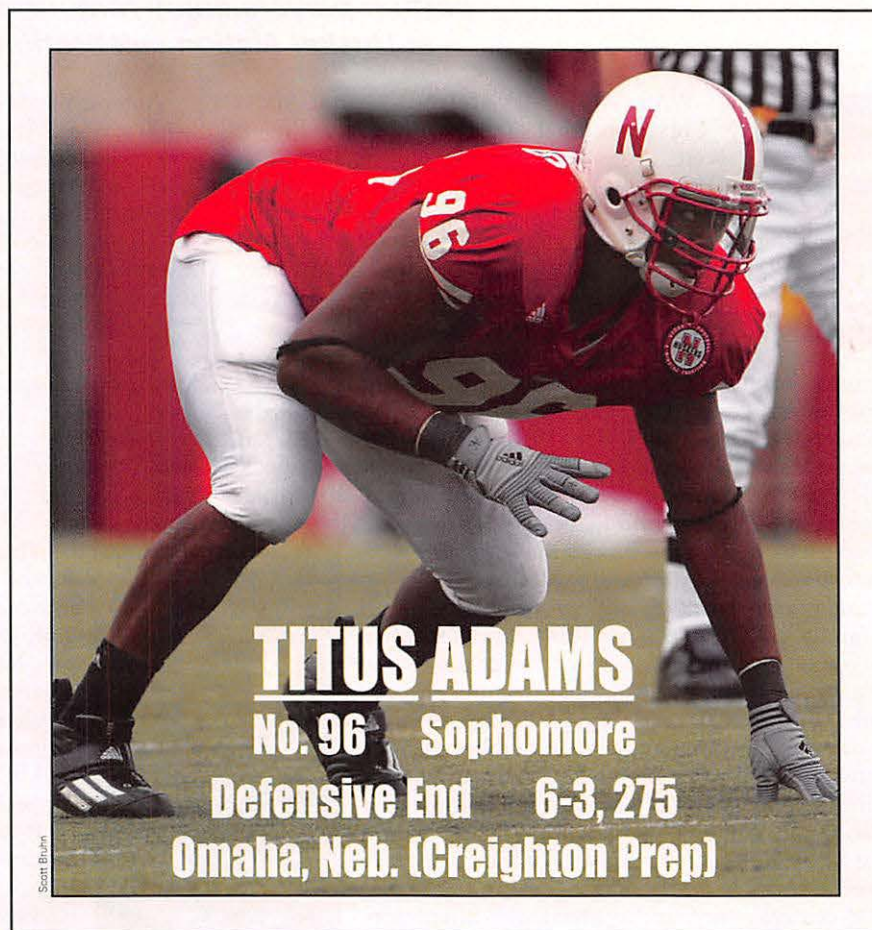
He also had good coaches, who "always kept me motivated," he says.

They were always positive, telling him he had potential but it was a matter of his being younger than the others. They also promised they would do their best to put him in a game.

That opportunity came near the end of the team's final game. Adams was called over and told he would be going in to play in the defensive line. He had no sooner borrowed a helmet, however, than the opposing team fumbled away the ball. The game ended before he could go in.

Nebraska's sophomore defensive end smiles when he recounts his first experience with organized football. "I always tried to keep my head held high, so I wouldn't get discouraged," he says.

Though he didn't get discouraged, he turned his attention to basketball about that time and didn't play football again until his freshman year at Omaha's Creighton Prep High School.



For one thing, he didn't need a helmet to play basketball. But more importantly, he had an aptitude for the sport and his size allowed him to dominate those his age, and even a little older.

He played forward and center, and occasionally moved outside.

"Every now and then I could get out there and handle the ball," Adams says. "I had good ball-handling skills. It came naturally. My game was pretty nice."

In addition to perfecting his game on a hoop attached to the family garage, he regularly competed against older players, and they helped him develop his game. He played on youth league teams that traveled out-of-state, from Minnesota to Florida, and figured his athletic future would be in basketball.

When he settled on Creighton Prep — Jerry was an all-state running back at Omaha South — he did so expecting

to make the varsity basketball team as a freshman. Although that didn't happen, he was not only on the varsity as a sophomore but also a starter from the middle of the season on.

He was chosen team captain his senior year but gave up basketball midway through that season in order to focus on football, working in the weight room and getting his grades in order.

The decision was difficult, he says. But he had signed a letter of intent to accept a football scholarship from Nebraska by then, and he was determined to make the most of that opportunity.

His basketball coach and teammates were supportive of his decision.

"Basketball was important to me," says Adams. "I had been playing it all my life. But I had to give it up to get to something more important in my life, which is football now."

Undeterred by his first encounter

with football, Adams was encouraged to go out for the team as a freshman at Creighton Prep. He had the size, and friends told him he needed to try out.

As he remembers it, he reported a day late and spent one practice in sweat clothes while the others practiced in pads. His first day in pads, he couldn't contain his enthusiasm, he says.

He wanted to be a running back like his brother, but his size screamed lineman. He opted for defense because he liked "to run around and tackle people," he says. Early on, however, "there wasn't much (tackling) technique. I remember just jumping on people's backs."

The eager freshman quickly attracted the attention of his coaches. "I had pretty good speed," Adams says. "And I was pretty much around the ball, just jumping on people."


By his sophomore year, he was starting in the defensive line for Coach Tom Jaworski. He was an All-Nebraska selection as a junior and senior, and honorary defensive captain in 2000.

Adams saw significant action in the defensive line as a redshirted freshman at Nebraska. Now he's in the rotation as a defensive end, as well as still lining up inside in certain situations.


He has come a long way since that first season in organized football, with no helmet and never getting to play in a game. But "I was part of a team," he says. "It feels good to be a part of a team." ■


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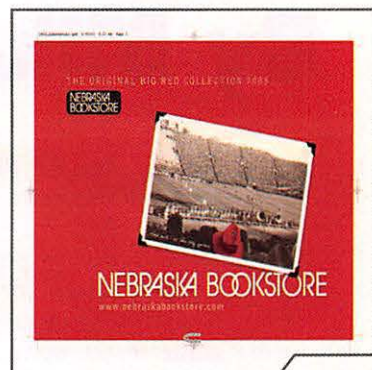
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BIG Challenge

By Mike Babcock

When Richie Incognito had his shirt-and-tie picture taken for the Nebraska football media guide in the spring, he had to borrow a shirt and tie from Le Kevin Smith.

Although Incognito describes himself and Tim Green as the "fashion consultants" for the offensive line, daily fashion for him at this time of the year typically includes

shorts, a Husker T-shirt and flip-flops. "Whatever is laying on the floor, that's what I'm wearing," he says. "Give it the smell test, and if it's good to go, if it doesn't smell, then I'm wearing it."

That's often Green's going-to-class look even after the weather turns cold. "You'll catch me in the winter wearing shorts and sandals," he says. Campus casual is a generous description.

Football players don't dress much differently than most students, of

course. But sometimes they are limited by what is available, not necessarily on the floor but rather in the stores. That can be a significant problem for the big guys, offensive linemen such as Incognito, who is 6-foot-3 and 310 pounds, and Green, who is 6-foot-4 and 320 pounds.

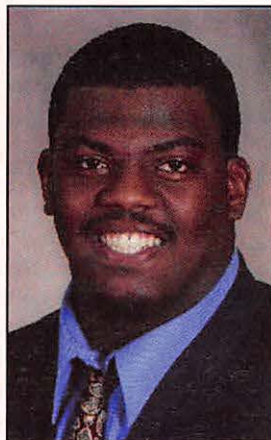
Incognito wears XXXL shirts and slacks with a 42- or 44-inch waist. He is lucky with the waist, he says. Some guys have to find a bigger waist size just so the slacks will fit in the thighs.

That's the case for Josh Sewell (6-2, 300), who has a 40-inch waist. "My thighs are so big," says Sewell. "A lot of the other linemen have that same problem. We have to go for a bigger

FEATURE STORY



Scott Brown



All dressed up for their media guide photos are (clockwise, from top left) tackle Richie Incognito, defensive tackle Le Kevin Smith, guard Tim Green, center Josh Sewell and guard Jemayel Phillips. Phillips, whose feet are pictured at left, wears size-19, triple-wide shoes. His football shoes, as well as those of tackle Dan Vili Waldrop are specially made by Adidas.



enge

Wardrobes of Husker linemen often limited by what's available

waist so we get the right fit in the legs." Then the slacks have to be tailored.

The linemen often shop on the Internet because of a limited size selection in retail stores. "You can't just go to the store and pick something off the rack," Sewell says.

Sometimes, you wouldn't be interested in picking something off the rack even if you could, like in a big-and-tall men's store, according to Smith, a 6-2, 305-pound defensive tackle. "See, that's what I always tell my girlfriend," he says. "She says, 'Well, we can go to the big-and-tall place.' And I say, 'Big-and-tall means, big, tall and ugly.' That's all you're going to find there."

Green agrees. "The thing is, the bigger guys' stuff is more for the adults, the dads," he says. "My dad is a pretty big guy, about 6-4, 6-5, 330, and he wears stuff, you know, that says, 'Big Daddy.' None of us are dads yet, so how can we wear a 'Big Daddy' shirt?"

His dad has some big-man shirts "that are pretty cheesy," Green says. "One of them says, 'If I were any cooler, I'd be an ice cube.' Some of those things you just don't wear unless you're a little older. Then you can get away with it. But being in college, I don't think that would be a style for you."

Big and tall stores often have "weird stuff you'd never wear,"

Incognito says.

Clothing manufacturers apparently have "some kind of fashion thing against big guys," says Smith. "They think that all big guys dress dopey, that we don't have any style."

Smith considers himself a stylish dresser and brought his wardrobe with him from Macon, Ga. The best big-and-tall shopping is in Atlanta, he says, or closer to Lincoln, in Kansas City. He doesn't order from the Internet because he never knows what size he is going to get. "You wear a 3X in something and their 3X fits like a 5X," he says. "So I'm skeptical doing that."

Jemayel Phillips (6-6, 365) found a nice pair of wingtip dress shoes in

Kansas City, or rather his brother found them for him, no small accomplishment considering the redshirted freshman offensive guard known as "Big Smooth" wears size-19, triple-wide shoes — his feet are 5 1/2 inches across.

His football shoes, as well as those of Dan Vili Waldrop (6-5, 350), are specially made by Adidas. "The biggest thing for me is finding shoes," says Phillips.

When he finds them, they come at a price. Those his brother located in Kansas City sold for \$400. But "I decided if we're going to do it, we might as well do it the best we can," he says. "Just because we're big, we can still have style."

"It's just depressing for big guys."

— Nebraska center Josh Sewell

Phillips — 54-long sport coat and 48-inch waist slacks — also wears T-shirts, shorts and flip-flops to class this time of the year, when comfort not style is the over-riding consideration. On game day, however, "I'm going to try to look as sharp as possible," he says, "even home games."

Proper apparel for road trips is

now coat and tie, "dress the way we play," Green says.

The new dress code for the road meant some players had to buy a suit or sport coat, Incognito and Phillips among them. Phillips had a sport coat from when he was in high school. He wore it for the media guide photo, in fact. But it doesn't fit properly anymore. "I've grown since then," he says.

Sewell has grown since high school, too, and he plans to lose weight when he's finished playing. "Weighing this much is kind of frustrating," he says. "I have to eat a lot to keep weight on. Sometimes, people think linemen just eat all the time. I get tired of eating."

In addition, "I'm kind of vain, I guess," he says.

In his role as self-proclaimed fashion consultant for the offensive line, Incognito considers Sewell sartorially challenged. "Josh doesn't know how to dress," Incognito says. "He wears his shorts too high, and he's always wearing a collared shirt, kind of a preppy guy. I suppose that's how all those (Lincoln) Southeast (High) guys are. They're off the chart."

Phillips offers fashion tips, too. "I've told Sewell this before, you've got to know how to color coordinate," he says. "Don't let the suit make you, you make the suit. It's all about how you do it. That's what I always say."

Sewell wears size triple-X shirts because double-X shirts are a little too small and he needs something in between. Finding T-shirts is easy, but "if you want nice shirts, it's kind of tough," he says. "It's just depressing for big guys."

When someone finds something stylish in big-and-tall sizes, they are quick to share the information. "It's like a treasure," says Sewell. "You're always asking guys, 'Where'd you get that?'"

"It's pretty cool when you find something." ■

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Nebraska quarterback Jammal Lord is upended by Utah State cornerback Mark Estelle. Lord was NU's leading rusher with 20 carries for 72 yards.

Nebraska 31
Utah State 7

'Nose for

Weakside linebacker Williams again key figure as defense helps offset inconsistent offense

BY MIKE BABCOCK
PHOTOS BY SCOTT BRUHN

What makes Demorrio Williams such an effective pass rusher is his quickness off the snap and his "nose for the ball," Dan Vili Waldrop said after Nebraska's 31-7 victory against Utah State.

A blocker has to be precise to have any hope of dealing with Williams.

At least once, the tackle whose job it was to block Williams wasn't precise in his technique. He gave Williams "his weak shoulder," said Vili Waldrop, an offensive tackle. He "turned out."

And when he did, "I knew that tackle was done."

In a 19-second span of the second quarter, the Utah State player attempting to protect quarterback Travis Cox failed twice. Williams sacked Cox both times and forced fumbles. He recovered the first at the Aggies' 2-yard line, and Titus Adams recovered the second at the Aggies' 35.

Both led to scores, a Judd Davies touchdown and a David Dyches field goal.

Prior to Williams' efforts, the Cornhuskers trailed 7-6. Afterward, they led 15-7. And though they didn't distance themselves from the visitors until the second half, they had enough to win.

GAME STORY

For the second week in a row, Williams was a key figure in a defensive effort that helped to offset an inconsistent offense. The senior weakside linebacker tied a school record for sacks by a linebacker — he finished with three — and short-circuited a Utah State offense predicated on the pass.

"He was in position to make plays and he made them," defensive coordinator Bo Pelini said.

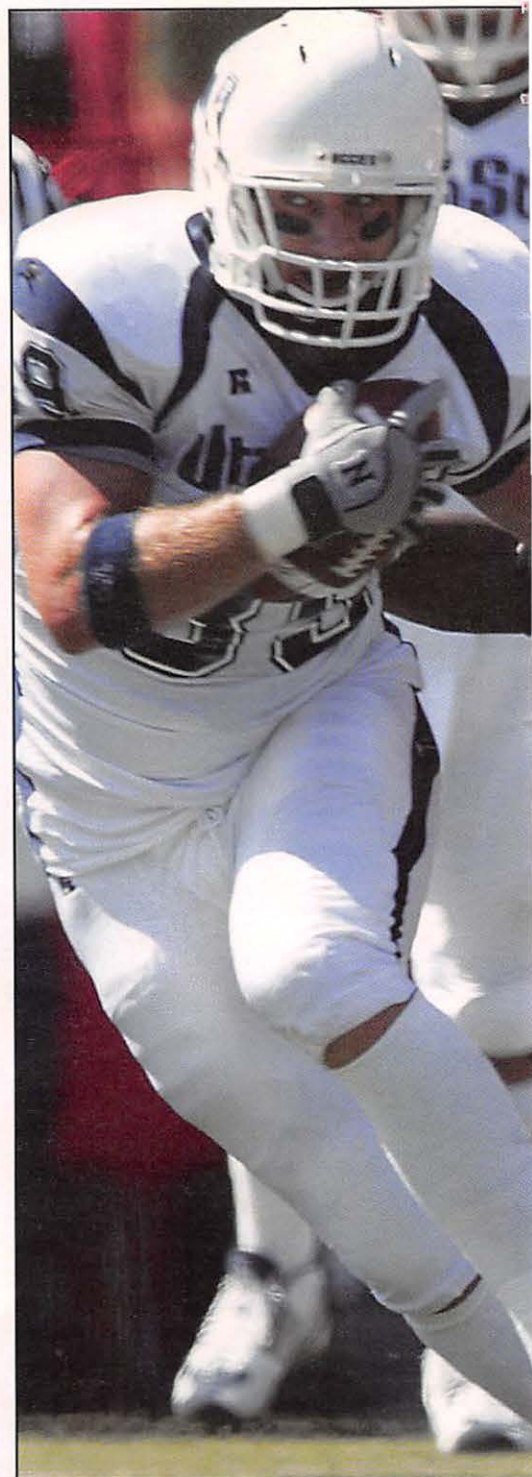
As was the case the previous week against Oklahoma State, Nebraska yielded a touchdown early and then settled in. Utah State gained 145 yards in the first quarter but managed only 93 yards the rest of the way, including 50 yards on its final possession against Cornhusker reserves.

That possession ended with a failed field goal from 47 yards as time elapsed.

Aggies Coach Mick Dennehy took a timeout with 2 seconds remaining to attempt the kick, after it appeared the game had ended and players from both sides started onto the field.

The timeout wasn't the only unusual aspect of the game, during which those in Memorial Stadium's student section chanted the name of Joe Dailey, Nebraska's freshman quarterback.

Dailey saw his first action as a



Cornhusker late in the third quarter and "did great," said starting quarterback Jammal Lord. "I was yelling his name, too, to tell you the truth."

Dailey's presence held fan interest,

the Ball'



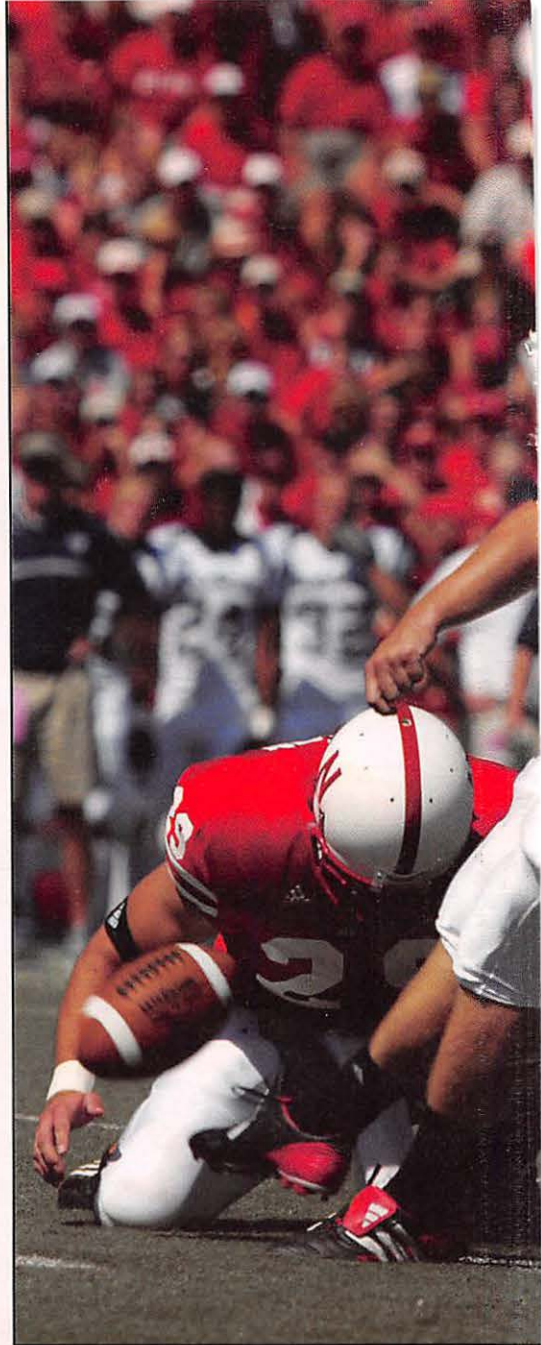
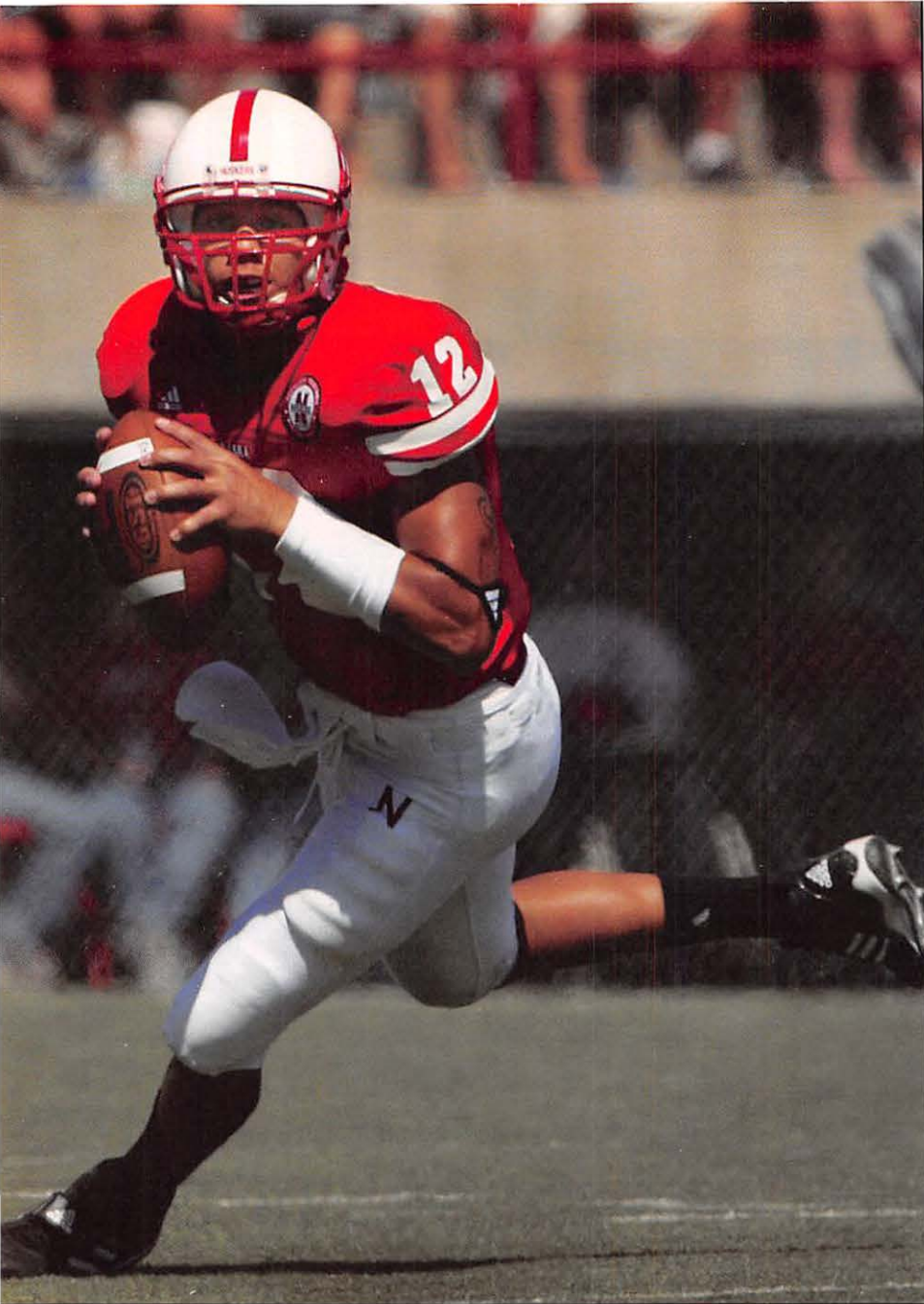
Nebraska weakside linebacker Demorrio Williams (7) grabs Utah State tailback David Fiefia, as teammate Barrett Ruud (38) moves in. Williams finished with eight tackles, including three sacks.

after Dyches, another true freshman, had given Nebraska breathing room with the second and third of his four

field goals on the afternoon.

Only three other times in school history has someone kicked as many

as four field goals in a game. Kris Brown did it twice during his career, and Dale Klein set the school record



Two more true freshmen made their debuts. Quarterback Joe Dailey (left) rushed for 47 yards and passed for another 47 after entering the game out of the hold of Kellen Huston at right) connected on four field goals after taking over the place-kicking duties early in the game.

with seven.

Dyches got his opportunity after starting place-kicker Sandro DeAngelis missed the extra-point kick following the game's first touchdown, on Lord's 15-yard run with 5:31 left in the opening quarter.

Dyches, who had yet to play and might still have been redshirted, kicked field goals of 23, 20, 29 and 26 yards. Coach Frank Solich appreciated Dyches' effort. But he didn't appreciate the fact that the Cornhuskers had to settle for field goals on those four possessions.

Nebraska had similar offensive problems against Oklahoma State.

"If you can't finish off drives, usually it comes back to haunt you,"

Solich said. "You can only field-goal people to death so long, and so we need to really be able to put some points on the board."

For the second consecutive week, the Cornhuskers had a decided advantage in time of possession, nearly 17 minutes against Utah State, and offensive snaps, 81 to Utah State's 58.

"Sooner or later, we've got to get to the point where the point production is matching the amounts of snaps we're getting and the amount of time we're on the field offensively," said Solich.

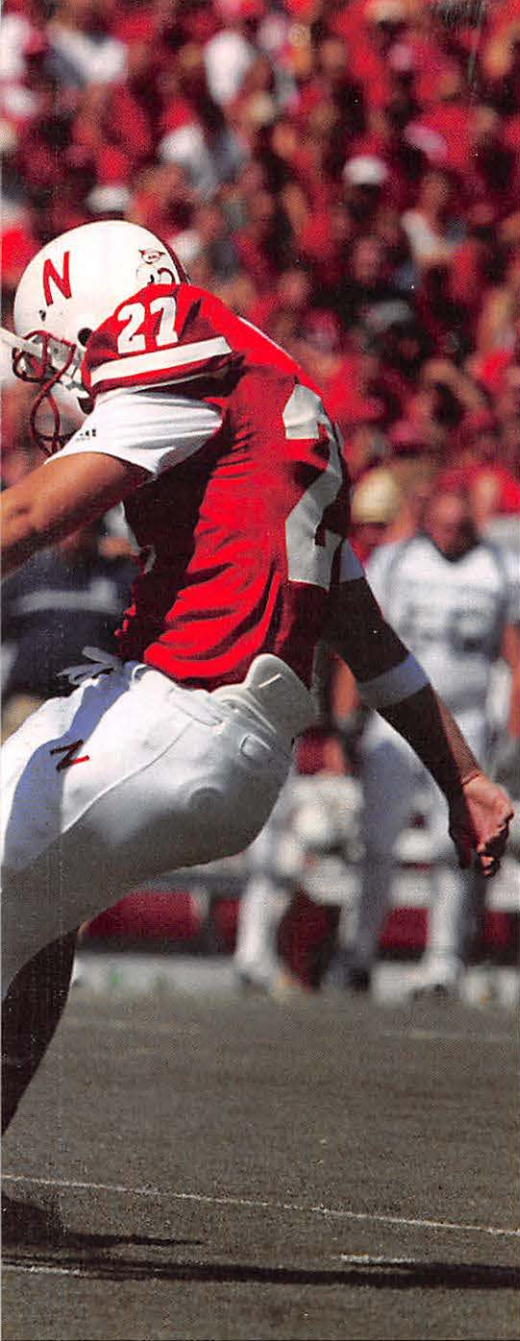
"We need to be able to be more point-productive at the end of our drives."

Utah State started off as if it would

be point-productive, responding to Nebraska's first touchdown by moving 66 yards on four plays, all passes, the last a 41-yarder from Cox to Chris Cooley.

The Aggies had driven to the Nebraska 29-yard line on their first possession before stalling and it appeared as if their shifting, pass-oriented attack might be an on-going concern.

But a Josh Bullocks pass interception early in the second quarter, on the first play after Utah State recovered a Lord fumble at the Nebraska 32-yard line, set the tone. The next two possessions ended with the Williams-forced fumbles, and that was pretty much that for the Aggies.



ame late in the third quarter. David Dyches (kick-

"They were kind of 'nickel-and-dimeing' us down the field and we had to do what we could do to slow them down," said Williams, who was credited with eight tackles.

"The first couple of drives they had, I was kind of off and on the field, and then I finally came up with the first sack, and he (Pelini) just left me out there. We had to put some pressure on the quarterback."

Williams "was killing them out there," Vili Waldrop said.

He killed Oklahoma State with his relentless pressure, too.

"It will be interesting to see how teams adjust to him," said Pelini.

That might be easier said than done. ■

GAME NOTES

Notes And Quotes From The Utah State Game

INEXCUSABLE

A pair of personal foul penalties drew Coach Frank Solich's ire. "To me, that's inexcusable," he said. "It's a team game, and any time you focus on yourself, you're going to get calls against you. We've had enough of that. Two in this game, in the first half, was absolutely ridiculous."

The team has players "that are extremely emotional," he said. But "they've got to understand that any time you do something that sets your team back, that's not acceptable."

The issue "will be addressed," said Solich.

STILL ROOM TO IMPROVE

Even though Nebraska's system of signaling in plays from the sideline improved from the first game, "we had some breakdowns in terms of what we thought was called and what was run," Solich said. "It wasn't extensive to the point where we just threw our hands up. But we can get better."

And more to the point, "we need to get better," he said.

MORE NEW FACES

Four members of the 2003 recruiting class saw their first action against Utah State: junior college transfers Donald DeFrاند (cornerback) and Darren DeLone (offensive tackle) and true freshmen Joe Dailey (quarterback) and David Dyches (place-kicker).

They joined three members of the class who played for the first time against Oklahoma State: Andy Birkel, Brandon Teamer and Lane Kelly, all of whom also saw action against the Aggies.

AUSPICIOUS DEBUTS

Dailey and Dyches had auspicious debuts. Dailey completed 4-of-5 passes for 47 yards and rushed for 47 yards on nine carries, while Dyches kicked four field goals in four attempts — he kicked only four field goals, in seven attempts, during his senior season at Houston's Westfield High.

The experience was "awesome," he said.

Despite his success, Dyches apparently will still be competing with junior Sandro DeAngelis for kicking duties. "We'll look at that," Solich said. "It was unfortunate that Sandro missed that extra point right out of the box. David needed to get some opportunities . . . and made the most of those."

Solich wasn't happy with Dyches' kickoffs, however. "All those kickoffs that you saw were not necessarily by design, those ones that were bouncing around," he said. "I'd like to take credit for them, but really, we were trying to kick deep. We need work there. It will continue to be a battle."

GETTING BETTER

Even though the Cornhuskers "don't consider ourselves a great throwing team," said Solich, "we're working on that." And the passing against Utah State was better than the week before.

Jammal Lord completed 8-of-12 for 85 yards, giving Nebraska a combined 12-of-17 for 132 yards without an interception. "All in all, we were able to get some things done in the passing game, which is really important. The quarterback play, I thought, was good today," Solich said.

Lord was the game's leading rusher, with 72 yards on 20 carries.

Ross Pilkington and Matt Herian combined to catch nine passes for 119 yards.

DIFFERENCE-MAKER

Cornhusker weakside linebacker Demorrio Williams earned praise from Utah State wide receiver Kenny Coleman. "He's tough, a good player that forced us to change our game plan today," Coleman said. "He was the difference-maker. Williams was all over us after the second series of the game."

ENDORF OUT

Senior Dale Endorf, a walk-on place-kicker from Wichita, Kan., has been lost for the season because of a knee injury suffered when he kicked off for the first time against Oklahoma State. With Endorf out of the picture, the freshman Dyches moved in.

HALL OF FAME

Nine former Cornhuskers were inducted into the Nebraska Football Hall of Fame at a reception on the night before the game. The nine along with four others from Nebraska's state colleges were introduced at the game. The former Cornhuskers: Marvin Crenshaw, OT (1972-74); Mike Croel, OLB (1987-90); Tom Davis, C (1975-77); Harry Grimminger, G (1982-84); Rod Horn, DT (1977-79); Ernest Kroger, HB-LB, (1907-08); Bill Lewis, C (1983-85); Clete Pillen, LB (1974-76) and Jamie Williams, TE (1979-82). ■

SCOUTING REPORT

2003 SCHEDULE

1	Aug. 30	Oklahoma St. (1-1), W 17-7	1-0
2	Sept. 6	Utah State (0-2), W 31-7	2-0
3	Sept. 13	Penn State (1-1), 7 p.m., ABC	
4	Sept. 25	@ Southern Miss (1-1), 6:30 p.m., ESPN	
5	Oct. 4	Troy State (0-2), TBA	
6	Oct. 11	@ Missouri (2-0), TBA	
7	Oct. 18	Texas A&M (2-0), TBA (Homecoming)	
8	Oct. 25	Iowa State (2-0), TBA	
9	Nov. 1	@ Texas (1-0), TBA	
10	Nov. 8	@ Kansas (1-1), TBA	
11	Nov. 15	Kansas State (3-0), TBA	
12	Nov. 28	@ Colorado (2-0), 11 a.m., ABC	
	Dec. 7	Big 12 Championship at Kansas City, Mo., 7 p.m.	

UPCOMING OPPONENTS' SCHEDULES

	Penn State (1-1)
Aug. 30	Temple, W 23-10
Sept. 6	Boston College, L 27-14
Sept. 13	@ Nebraska
Sept. 20	Kent State
Sept. 27	Minnesota
Oct. 4	Wisconsin
Oct. 11	@ Purdue
Oct. 25	@ Iowa
Nov. 1	Ohio State
Nov. 8	@ Northwestern
Nov. 15	Indiana
Nov. 22	@ Michigan State

	Southern Miss (1-1)
Aug. 30	@ California, L 24-3
Sept. 4	@ Ala.-Birmingham, W 17-12
Sept. 13	Memphis
Sept. 25	Nebraska
Oct. 4	@ Cincinnati
Oct. 11	@ Alabama
Oct. 25	South Florida
Nov. 1	Louisiana-Lafayette
Nov. 8	@ Houston
Nov. 15	Tulane
Nov. 20	TCU
Nov. 29	@ East Carolina

BIG 12 AT A GLANCE

Sunday, Aug. 31
Texas 66, New Mexico State 7
Saturday, Sept. 6
Nebraska 31, Utah State 7
Iowa State 48, Ohio 20
Colorado 16, UCLA 14
Missouri 35, Ball State 7
Kansas 46, UNLV 24
Texas Tech 42, New Mexico 28
Oklahoma State 48, Wyoming 24
Kansas State 55, McNeese State 14
Oklahoma 20, Alabama 13
Texas A&M 28, Utah 26
North Texas 52, Baylor 14

Saturday, Sept. 13
Penn State at Nebraska
Arkansas at Texas
Iowa at Iowa State
Eastern Illinois at Missouri
Massachusetts at Kansas State
Washington State at Colorado
Kansas at Wyoming
SMU at Baylor
SMS at Oklahoma State
Fresno State at Oklahoma

Thursday, Sept. 18
Texas A&M at Virginia Tech

GAME 3

Penn State Sept. 13

Location: University Park, Pa.

Enrollment: 41,445

2003 record: 1-1

Coach: Joe Paterno, 38th year

Series: Penn State leads 7-5



7 p.m. CDT, ABC

Memorial Stadium, Lincoln, Neb.

Lion to Watch

Senior middle linebacker Gino Capone, a second-team All-Big Ten selection in 2002, leads a strong Penn State line-backing unit that returned all its starters from last season. Capone, who was named to the Butkus Award Watch



List, is the Nittany Lions' top returning tackler and has 21 stops in two games this season.

Quick Facts

Legendary Coach Joe Paterno, in his 54th year at Penn State and 38th as head coach, is the all-time leader in career wins by a major college coach. Paterno, 76, also is the all-time leader in bowl appearances (31) and post-season victories (20).

The Nittany Lions last visited Nebraska in 1981, and they left town with a 30-24 victory. Nebraska has won three of the five meetings in Lincoln, but Penn State leads the series 7-5 after its 40-7 victory last fall in University Park, Pa.

Junior quarterback Zack Mills, who was pulled in favor of sophomore Michael Robinson in the second half of the loss to Boston College, has completed 21-of-45 passes, with 2 interceptions.

ON DECK

Southern Miss Sept. 25

Location: Hattiesburg, Miss.

Enrollment: 15,259

2003 record: 1-1

Coach: Jeff Bower, 13th year

Series: Nebraska leads 1-0



6:30 p.m. CDT, ESPN

Roberts Stadium, Hattiesburg, Miss.

TENTATIVE 2-DEEPS

NEBRASKA OFFENSE

XWR	2	Ross Pilkington*	6-0	190	So.
	19	Andy Birkel	6-2	170	Fr.
LT	51	Richie Incognito*	6-3	300	So.
	69	Nick Povenzo*	6-3	300	Jr.
LG	78	Mike Erickson**	6-4	305	Jr.
	72	Tim Green	6-4	325	Sr.
C	79	Josh Sewell*	6-2	300	Sr.
	64	Kurt Mann	6-3	290	RFr.
RG	71	Jake Andersen*	6-1	300	Jr.
	75	Brandon Koch	6-3	310	So.
RT	68	Dan Villi Waldrop***	6-5	350	Sr.
	68	Darren DeLone	6-5	320	Jr.
TE	11	Matt Herian*	6-5	240	So.
	82	Phil Peetz**	6-2	270	Sr.
QB	5	Jammal Lord***	6-2	220	Sr.
	12	Joe Dailey	6-0	200	Fr.
FB	4	Judd Davies***	6-0	250	Sr.
	45	Steve Kriewald**	5-10	250	Jr.
IB	1	Josh Davis**	5-11	205	Sr.
	9	David Horne*	6-0	200	So.
ZWR	10	Mark LeFlore*	5-11	185	So.
	13	Tim Lilley*	6-2	205	Sr.
PK	27	David Dyches	6-1	190	Fr.

NEBRASKA DEFENSE

LDE	5	Benard Thomas**	6-4	265	Jr.
	96	Titus Adams*	6-3	290	So.
NT	59	Ryon Bingham**	6-3	290	So.
	94	Patrick Kabongo***	6-6	320	Sr.
DT	66	Le Kevin Smith*	6-2	305	So.
	74	Brandon Teamer	6-5	270	Fr.
RDE	88	Trevor Johnson***	6-4	255	Sr.
	90	Adam Carriker	6-6	260	RFr.
BLB	2	T.J. Hollowell***	6-0	230	Sr.
	11	Ira Cooper**	6-2	230	Jr.
MLB	38	Barrett Ruud*	6-2	240	Jr.
	54	Chad Sievers*	6-3	230	Jr.
WLB	7	Demorrio Williams	6-1	210	Sr.
	39	Chad Buller*	5-11	215	So.
LCB	3	Fabian Washington*	5-11	175	So.
	4	Terrell Butler*	5-10	190	So.
FS	20	Josh Bullocks*	6-1	195	So.
	31	Jerrell Pippens***	6-2	195	Sr.
SS	21	Phillip Bland**	5-11	205	Jr.
or	14	Daniel Bullocks*	6-1	200	So.
RCB	28	Pat Ricketts***	5-11	180	Sr.
or	1	Lornell McPherson**	5-9	175	Jr.
P	19	Kyle Larson**	6-0	205	Sr.

PENN STATE OFFENSE

SE	11	Tony Johnson	5-11	206	Sr.
	9	Terrance Phillips	5-11	183	So.
LT	67	Levi Brown	6-5	309	RFr.
	75	Chris McKelvy	6-4	320	Sr.
LG	54	Scott Davis	6-3	291	Jr.
	59	Charles Rush	6-2	297	So.
C	61	David Costlow	6-3	280	Sr.
	66	Lance Antolick	6-3	277	So.
RG	70	Nick Marmo	6-5	292	Jr.
	74	Tyler Reed	6-4	309	So.
RT	76	Damone Jones	6-5	314	Sr.
	75	Chris McKelvy	6-4	320	Sr.
TE	93	Casey Williams	6-0	237	Sr.
	33	Mike Lukac	6-3	253	Sr.
QB	7	Zack Mills	6-3	215	Jr.
	12	Michael Robinson	6-2	229	So.
TB	44	Ricky Upton	5-11	226	Sr.
	22	Austin Scott	6-0	215	Fr.
FB	42	Sean McHugh	6-6	263	Sr.
	30	BranDon Snow	6-1	236	RFr.
FL	13	Kinta Palmer	6-4	192	So.
	31	Ernie Terrell	6-3	200	So.
PK	4	Robbie Gould	6-1	168	Jr.

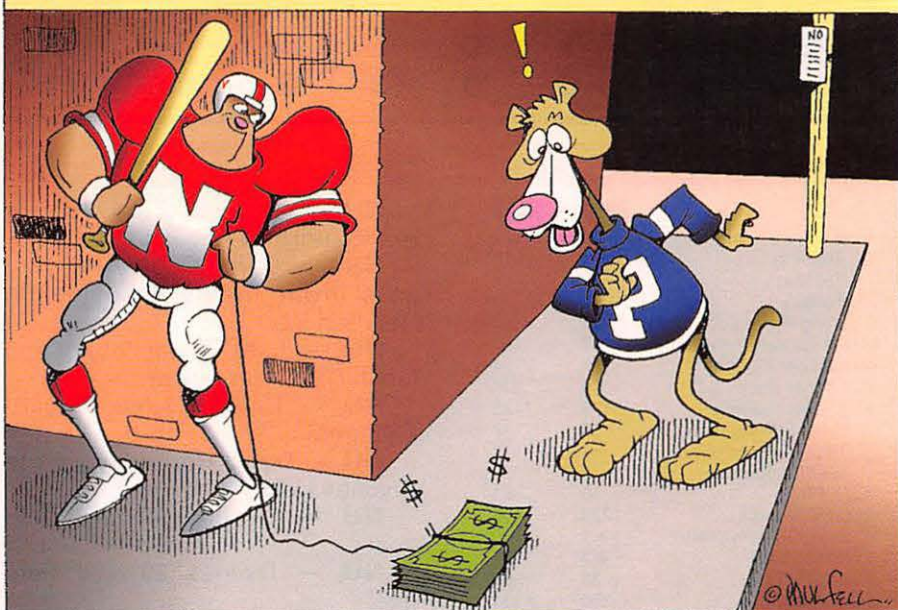
PENN STATE DEFENSE

LE	87	John Bronson	6-3	261	Jr.
	55	Matt Rice	6-4	270	So.
DT	91	Tamba Hall	6-3	277	So.
	41	Scott Paxson	6-5	283	So.
RT	92	Ed Johnson	6-2	289	RFr.
	69	Jason Robinson	6-3	282	So.
RE	17	Lavon Chisley	6-5	263	So.
	99	Sam Ruhe	6-6	270	Jr.
OLB	2	Deryck Toles	6-0	223	Sr.
	40	T.C. Crosby	6-0	241	Jr.
ILB	47	Gino Capone	6-2	238	Sr.
	16	Andy Ryland	6-2	238	Sr.
OLB	94	Derek Wake	6-3	244	Jr.
	58	Dethrell Garcia	6-2	244	So.
LCB	21	Alan Zernaltis	6-2	191	So.
	5	Maurice Humphrey	5-11	189	RFr.
FS	27	Chris Harrell	6-2	202	Jr.
or	18	Andrew Guman	6-3	220	Jr.
H	15	Yaacov Yisrael	6-0	195	Sr.
or	10	Calvin Lowry	6-0	197	So.
RCB	25	Rich Gardner	5-11	188	Sr.
	34	Gio Vendemia	6-0	184	So.
P	36	Jeremy Kapinos	6-1	221	RFr.

THE PAUL FELL PREDICTION

NEBRASKA vs.

PENN STATE



SEPTEMBER 13, 2003

IT'S PAYBACK TIME WHEN THE NITTANY LIONS COME TO CALL AT THE OL' HUSKER HOME PLACE!

Picks

Brian Hill
Editor

Nebraska doesn't have all its parts running smoothly, but the Huskers appear to be further along than the Nittany Lions, who trailed Boston College 24-0 at home before losing 27-14. The Nebraska defense should continue to provide a big boost with turnovers and field position, and if the offense can finish off its drives, this could be as one-sided as last year's game. **Nebraska 27, Penn State 13**

Mike Babcock
Contributing Editor

It's payback time for Penn State. There's a good chance Nebraska fans will treat Nittany Lions fans who travel

PENN STATE AT NEBRASKA

to Lincoln better than they were treated in State College. But comparable treatment of the team would be appropriate. It's not likely to be as lopsided, however. **Nebraska 24, Penn State 10**

Terry Douglass
Grand Island Independent
Sports Editor

Penn State rolled it up on Nebraska last season in Happy Valley, sending Nebraska on a downward spiral that lasted all season. Here's guessing the Cornhuskers haven't forgotten. The home-field advantage and Bo Pelini's defense will all add up to a little revenge for NU. **Nebraska 23, Penn State 10**

GAME STATS

NEBRASKA VS. UTAH STATE

Sept. 6, 2003 • Memorial Stadium • Lincoln, Neb.

SCORE BY QUARTERS

Utah State	7	0	0	0	—	7
Nebraska	6	9	13	3	—	31

TEAM STATS

	US	NU
First Downs	14	22
Rushing	4	18
Passing	10	4
Penalty	0	0
Rushing Attempts	23	64
Yards Gained Rushing	97	297
Yards Lost Rushing	37	24
Net Yards Rushing	60	273
Net Yards Passing	178	132
Passes Attempted	35	17
Passes Completed	17	12
Had Intercepted	1	0
Total Plays	58	81
Total Net Yards	238	405
Avg. Gain Per Play	4.1	5.0
Fumbles-Lost	4-2	4-2
Penalties-Yards	6-33	5-50
Punts-Yards	7-260	3-131
Avg. Per Punt	37.1	43.7
Punt Returns-Yards	2-12	4-58
Interceptions-Yards	0-0	1-0
Fumble Returns-Yards	0-0	0-0
Kickoff Returns-Yards	5-106	2-38
Possession Time	21:43	38:17

SCORING

NU — Jammal Lord 15-yard run (Sandro DeAngelis kick failed)

US — Chris Cooley 41-yard pass from Travis Cox (Justin Hamblin kick)

NU — Judd Davies 1-yard run (Josh Davis run failed)

NU — David Dyches 23-yard field goal

NU — David Horne 3-yard run (Dyches kick)

NU — Dyches 20-yard field goal

NU — Dyches 29-yard field goal

NU — Dyches 26-yard field goal

Att. — 77,284

Weather — sunny

Temp. — 79

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

UTAH STATE

Name	Att.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
Fiefla, D.	9	60	6.7	17	0
Cooley, C.	2	15	7.5	9	0
Cox, T.	12	-15	-1.3	9	0

PASSING

Name	C-A-I	Pct.	Yds.	TD
Cox, T.	17-33-0	51.5	178	1
Toili, B.	0-1-0	0.0	0	0
Crivello, M.	0-1-1	0.0	0	0

RECEIVING

Name	No.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
Cooley, C.	6	92	15.3	41	1
Coleman, K.	4	51	12.7	26	0
Stephens, J.	2	21	10.5	12	0
Hicks, R.	2	6	3.0	3	0
Fiefla, D.	2	0	0.0	0	0
Stallworth, C.	1	8	8.0	8	0

PUNTING

Name	No.	Yds.	Avg.	LNG
Chaet, B.	6	242	40.3	49
Team	1	18	18.0	18

PUNT RETURNS

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Fiefla, D.	2	12	6.0	8	0

KICKOFF RETURNS

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Dennis, J.	4	97	29.2	43	0
Fiefla, D.	1	9	9.0	9	0

DEFENSE LEADERS

Name	UT	AT	TT	FL	Int.	Sacks
Washington, T.	3	9	12	0	0	0
Watts, R.	5	5	10	0	0	0
Stewart, J.	5	3	8	1-2	0	0
Putnam, N.	3	4	7	2-4	0	0
Rosencrans, M.	5	1	6	1-1	0	0
Dennis, J.	4	2	6	0	0	0
Estelle, M.	2	4	6	0	0	0

NEBRASKA

RUSHING

Name	Att.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
Lord, J.	20	72	3.6	15	1
Davis, J.	14	63	4.5	20	0
Horne, D.	10	50	5.0	11	1
Dailey, J.	9	47	5.2	23	0
Ross, C.	8	22	2.8	8	0

LeFlore, M.	1	21	21.0	21	0
Davis, J.	1	1	1.0	1	1
Team	1	-3	-3.0	0	0

PASSING

Name	C-A-I	Pct.	Yds.	TD
Lord, J.	8-12-0	66.6	85	0
Dailey, J.	4-5-0	80.0	47	0

RECEIVING

Name	No.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
Pilkington, R.	5	57	12.4	39	0
Herian, M.	4	62	15.5	15	0
Davis, J.	1	7	7.0	7	0
LeFlore, M.	1	5	5.0	5	0
Davis, J.	1	1	1.0	1	0

PUNTING

Name	No.	Yds.	Avg.	LNG
Larson, K.	3	131	43.7	54

PUNT RETURNS

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Davis, J.	3	44	14.7	30	0
Ross, C.	1	14	14.0	14	0

KICKOFF RETURNS

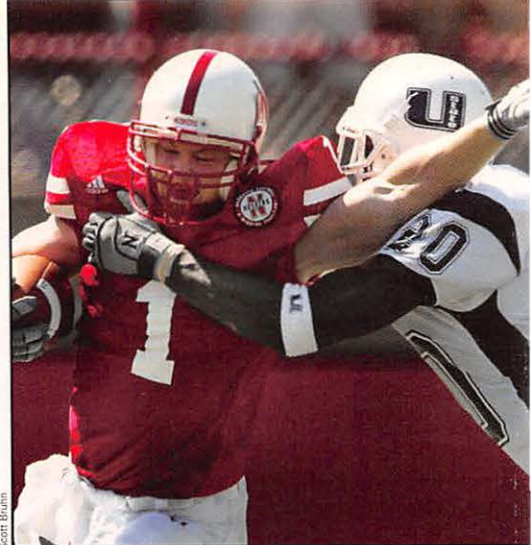
Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Davis, J.	1	30	30.0	30	0
Sievers, C.	1	8	8.0	8	0

FIELD GOALS

Name	Att.	Good	Long
Dyches, D.	4	4	29

DEFENSE

Name	UT	AT	TT	FL	Int.	Sacks
Ruud, B.	3	7	10	0	0	0
Williams, D.	5	3	8	3-27	0	3-27
Washington, F.	3	2	5	0	0	0
Buller, C.	3	2	5	0	0	0
Hollowell, T.	2	3	5	1-10	0	1-10
Bland, P.	2	1	3	0	0	0
Pippens, J.	2	0	2	0	0	0
Brungardt, M.	2	0	2	0	0	0
Johnson, T.	1	1	2	1-1	0	0
Kabongo, P.	1	1	2	0	0	0
Adams, T.	0	2	2	0	0	0
Bullocks, J.	0	2	2	0	1-0	0
Bullocks, D.	0	2	2	0	0	0
Ricketts, P.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Bradley, S.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Sievers, C.	1	0	1	0	0	0
McPherson, L.	0	1	1	0	0	0
Bingham, R.	0	1	1	0	0	0
Helming, J.	0	1	1	0	0	0
Keiser, D.	0	1	1	0	0	0



Nebraska I-back Josh Davis tries to get away from Utah State's Jerome Dennis.

2003 SEASON STATS

RUSHING

Name	G	Att.	Yds.	YPG	TD
Lord, J.	2	38	162	81.0	1
Davis, J.	2	34	158	79.0	0
Horne, D.	2	25	102	51.0	1
Dailey, J.	1	9	47	47.0	0
Davis, J.	2	11	34	17.0	2
Ross, C.	2	8	22	11.0	0
LeFlore, M.	2	1	21	10.5	0

PASSING

Name	G	C-A-I	Pct.	Yds.	TD
Lord, J.	2	16-28-1	57.1	163	0
Dailey, J.	1	4-5-0	80.0	47	0

RECEIVING

Name	G	No.	Yds.	YPC	YPG	TD
Herian, M.	2	7	104	14.9	52.0	0
Pilkington, R.	2	7	73	10.4	36.5	0
Davis, J.	2	2	19	9.5	9.5	0
Davis, J.	2	2	4	2.0	2.0	0
Liley, T.	2	1	5	5.0	2.5	0
LeFlore, M.	2	1	5	5.0	2.5	0

FIELD GOALS

Name	G	Att.	Good	Long
Dyches, D.	1	4	4	29
DeAngelis, S.	2	3	1	28

PUNTING

Name	No.	Yds.	Avg.	LNG
Larson, K.	8	312	39.0	54

PUNT RETURNS

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Davis, J.	6	74	12.3	30	0
Ross, C.	1	14	14.0	15	0

KICKOFF RETURNS

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Davis, J.	2	62	31.0	32	0
Sievers, C.	1	8	8.0	8	0

DEFENSIVE LEADERS

Name	G	UT	AT	TT	FL	Int.	S/Yds.
Williams, D.	2	12	5	17	4-30	0	3-27
Ruud, B.	2	5	12	17	1-1	0	0
Washington, F.	2	11	4	15	0	0	0
Hollowell, T.	2	4	4	8	1-10	0	1-10
Johnson, T.	2	3	4	7	1-1	0	0
Buller, C.	2	3	3	6	0	0	0
Pippens, J.	2	5	1	6	1-7	0	1-7
Adams, T.	2	5	1	6	0	0	0
Bland, P.	2	3	2	5	1-3	0	0
Bingham, R.	2	1	4	5	0	0	9
Bullocks, J.	2	0	5	5	0	3-0	0
Ricketts, P.	2	3	1	4	0	0	0
Thomas, B.	2	2	2	4	0	0	0

TEAM STATISTICS

	NU	OPP
Total Offensive Yards	751	421
Plays	162	116
Average Per Play	4.6	3.6
Average Per Game	375.5	210.5
Net Rushing Yards	541	146
Attempts	129	53
TDs Rushing	4	0
Net Passing Yards	210	275
Completions	20	30
Average Per Pass	6.4	4.4
Average Per Catch	10.5	9.2
Average Per Game	105.0	137.5
TDs Passing	0	2
Sacks By-Yards	5-44	0-0
Fumbles-Lost	6-3	6-4
Penalties-Yards	14-125	14-96

Scoring	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	OT	TOT
NU	9	9	27	3	0	48
Opponents	14	0	0	0	0	14

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WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

People Still Ask

Former Husker safety Blazek remembered for his interception return vs. UCLA

By Mike Babcock

Prior to a team banquet at the Japan Bowl in 1989, Mark Blazek and Troy Aikman were introduced. As Blazek offered his hand and started to say something, Aikman interrupted.

"You were down," Aikman said. "Maybe," Blazek replied.

In the third game of that season, against UCLA at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, Blazek intercepted an Aikman pass and returned it 75 yards for a touchdown. At least, officially he did.

It appeared he was down. He even hesitated for an instant. But players are coached to compete until the whistle sounds, stopping a play. And because there was no whistle, he took off.

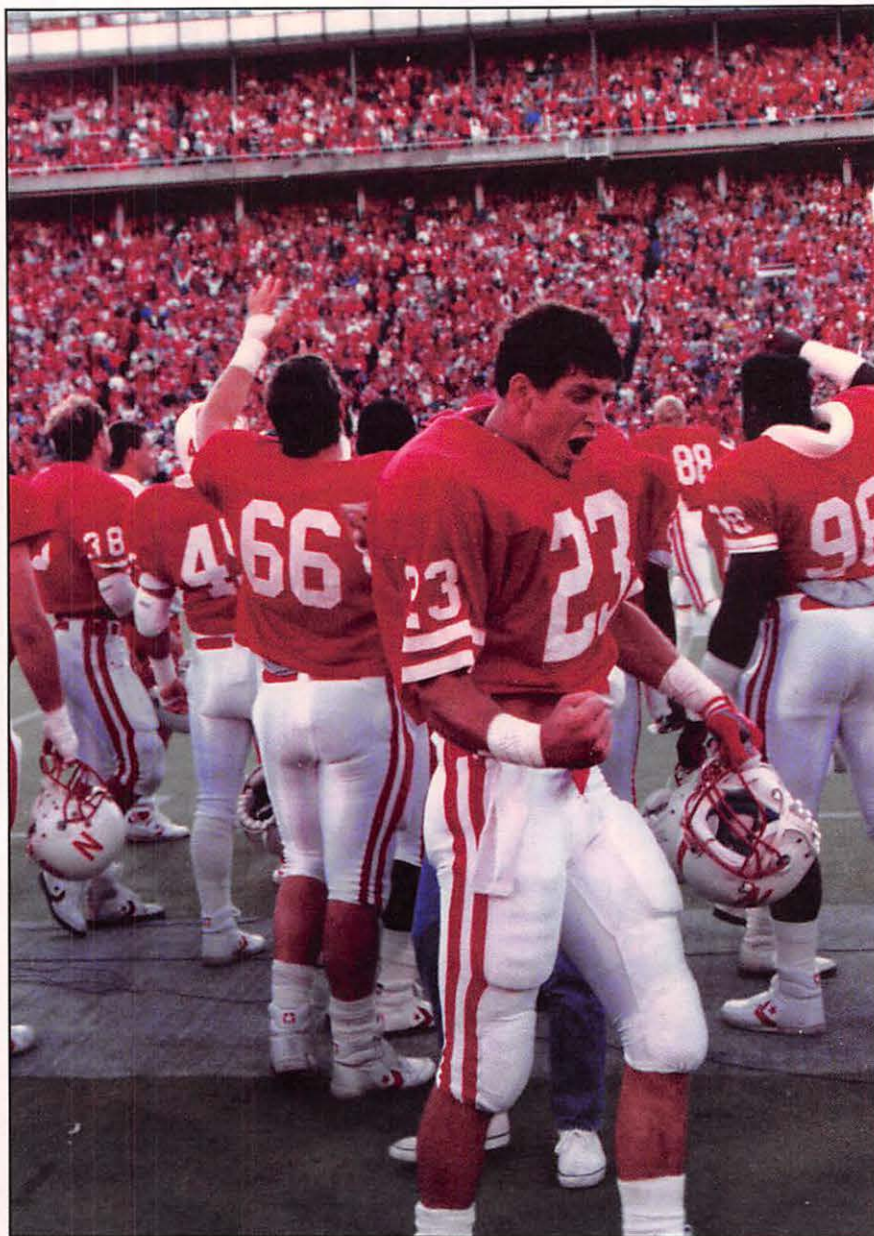
At the time, "it didn't seem like a big deal," says Blazek, the president of Oak Creek Valley Bank in Valparaiso, Neb., and a major in the Army National Guard. "We lost, so it didn't matter."

The Cornhuskers went to California with a No. 2 national ranking and returned with a 41-28 loss against a UCLA team ranked No. 5. The game was televised nationally.

Nebraska fell behind 28-0 in the first quarter and could never recover.

Blazek's interception and return for a touchdown came with 11:44 remaining in the second quarter.

Following the season, Blazek flew



Mark Blazek (23) celebrates on the sidelines. He had eight interceptions in his Nebraska career.

to New York City to receive a scholar-athlete award presented by the National Football Foundation/College Football Hall of Fame. Nebraska sports information director Don Bryant, who accompanied him on the trip, said he would be wealthy someday if he were to get a dollar every time someone brought up the Aikman interception. And Bryant

was right.

Blazek still gets questions about the play. But his journey from walk-on to starting safety is a much more interesting story, as well as evidence of the fact that you never know until you try.

That Blazek tried was a function of circumstance. Following his graduation from Raymond Central (Neb.)

High School, he considered going to nearby Doane College in Crete to play football with some of his high school teammates. That would have been his choice, if he had the money.

But he figured he could afford to go to college for only one year before getting a job, and if that were the case, he might as well walk on and try to play his one season at Nebraska.

He was a reserve safety on the freshman team and missed time because of a broken ankle. That would have been the extent of his career, had he not gotten a call from a National Guard recruiter in his dorm room during first-semester finals week. A friend had given his name to the recruiter.

A National Guard enlistment solved his financial problems and allowed him to continue playing football. He had considered a service academy appointment out of high school anyway.

The plan was to take his basic training during the summer following his freshman year. But a broken wrist suffered in Nebraska's spring game forced a delay in the training.

Instead of trying to establish himself on the depth chart during the fall of his sophomore year, he was sent to Fort Knox for basic training, armored division, tanks. Afterward, former Cornhusker linebackers coach John Melton regularly referred to him at practice as "the tank commander."

"Let's run it by the tank commander," Melton would say.

Though he missed that fall, Blazek still could have redshirted, which he thought would be the case when he returned to Nebraska at mid-year. His being assigned to the "future Huskers" group rather than the regular group during the winter conditioning program solidified that belief.

He was at the bottom of the depth chart when spring practice began, behind a half-dozen other safeties. By the end of practice, however, he had worked his way to second team, and following the spring game, secondary coach George Darlington told him he wouldn't be redshirted.

"That whole summer I thought, surely they'll figure out they made a mistake," says Blazek, who was probably the most anonymous sec-

ond-team player on the team.

Even though top-unit players asked him where he had come from, he was a back-up to Bryan Siebler in 1986 and a regular in 1987 and 1988, playing both free and strong safety as a senior.

His National Guard unit was flexible in allowing him to meet his monthly commitment during the season by spending Sunday in drill and then making up Saturday's drill when the football season was finished. One year, he made up the time the week of the university's spring break.

"If not for the National Guard, I wouldn't have played at Nebraska," Blazek says.

He took full advantage of the educational opportunity as well, earning Academic All-America recognition as a junior and senior and receiving an NCAA postgraduate scholarship.

Having finished his undergraduate degree, he enrolled in law school, after which the Lincoln law firm for which he was a clerk hired him. He spent three years as an associate in litigation and would have continued there if not for an opportunity at Oak

Creek Valley Bank, in his hometown.

He is in the legal section of the Nebraska National Guard, deputy judge advocate general.

His Guard basic training was "the best growing-up experience," says Blazek. It convinced him that Nebraska was where he wanted to be, playing football as well as getting an education.

As a student-athlete, he learned "time management and commitment," he says. And Coach Tom Osborne's program reinforced his sense of "discipline, hard work and ethics."

Blazek had the proper perspective before he decided to walk on at Nebraska. "There are two kinds of players," he says, "ones that live for nothing but their sport and throw the rest out the window and those who realize up-front that (attitude) is a longshot. I tried to take that approach."

The record shows that he intercepted eight passes during this career, among them the one everybody including Aikman remembers.

But there was much more to his career than that. ■

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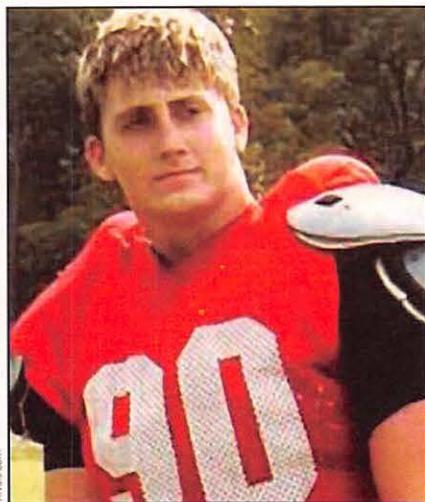
**California,
Louisiana ends
among those
considering NU**

By Doug Horwich

Skilled pass rushers are always in high demand and frequently in short supply.

At Nebraska, new defensive coordinator Bo Pelini has installed a new defensive system, and one position that has undergone change under the new regime is the defensive end position, formerly known in Lincoln as the "rush end" position.

This position has evolved over the past decade at Nebraska, beginning in 1992 when defensive coordinator Charlie McBride abandoned the old 5-2 in favor of a 4-3 base defense. Following the change, the players formerly known as "outside linebackers" became "rush ends," and



Defensive end Chris Bowers of Evangel Christian Academy in Baton Rouge, La., had 18 sacks as a junior.

that distinction remained for the next 11 seasons.

With the new name comes a slightly different focus in recruiting. Pelini's scheme often requires defensive ends playing on the strong side of the formation to take on double teams from offensive tackles and tight ends, thereby allowing scraping linebackers to make plays. This responsibility requires a large end

who can hold the point of attack against the run.

As Pelini showed in the Oklahoma State game, he likes to use lighter, faster players like linebacker Demorrio Williams as situational pass rushers in long-yardage situations and larger defensive ends like Benard Thomas, Titus Adams and Trevor Johnson in his base defenses.

For this reason, Nebraska is likely to pursue defensive ends in the 240-280-pound range, or players who would be expected to eventually grow into that weight range.

One player who has been receiving a great deal of attention from Nebraska recently is Grayson Gunheim (6-foot-6, 240 pounds, 4.6-second 40-yard dash) from Analy High School in Sebastopol, Calif. Gunheim is being recruited by the entire Pac-10, but Nebraska is very much in the running for his signature. In fact, the Huskers are Gunheim's current leader.

"So far, I'm leaning toward Nebraska, but I'm pretty wide open still," Gunheim said. "Nebraska and Stanford are recruiting me the hardest."

NEBRASKA COMMITMENTS FOR 2004

Player	Hometown (school)	Ht.	Wt.	Pos.
Lance Brandenburgh	Overland Park, Kan. (St. Thomas Aquinas)	6-1	215	LB
Andy Christensen	Bennington, Neb.	6-3	275	DT
Allan Evridge	Papillion, Neb. (Papillion-LaVista)	6-1	205	QB
Michael Keenan	Kansas City, Mo. (Oak Park)	6-2	220	LB
Maurice McClellan	Pawcatuck, Conn. (Stonington)	6-3	210	ATH
D.T. McDowell	Tucker, Ga.	6-1	190	QB
Terrence Nunn	Houston, Texas (Cypress Falls)	6-0	185	WR
Seth Olsen	Omaha, Neb. (Millard North)	6-5	300	OL
Ty Steinkuhler	Lincoln, Neb. (Southwest)	6-3	235	DE
Nathan Swift	Hutchinson, Minn.	6-3	190	WR

Gunheim, who already has received offers from every school in the Pac-10, is looking to play for a traditional football power, and the Huskers have definitely caught his attention.

"They are the biggest football school recruiting me," he said. "I've liked them for a while. I like to watch them play. Coach (Jeff) Jamrog and Coach (Scott) Downing have been writing to me. They're recruiting me for defensive end. They talk about what I see myself doing after football and other things like that."

In addition to being a tremendous all-around athlete, Gunheim also excels in the classroom and is fully qualified with an SAT of 1040 and a 3.5 GPA. He intends to weigh academics and social life heavily in making his decision.

"I'm looking for a pretty big football school and pretty good academics," Gunheim said. "I also want to see what the campus is like. For my official visits, I'll be going to Nebraska for sure. I haven't decided on the others yet, but I'm planning to take all five visits."

The Huskers appear to be in line for an official visit from this top West Coast athlete. Nebraska has a tradition of success with California players, and both Northern and Southern California have been vital Husker recruiting territories over the years. Top players from this state are hard to steal away from the Pac-10, but Gunheim loves Nebraska and is almost certain to take a trip to Lincoln in the coming months.

Another top talent who has his eye on Nebraska is Chris Bowers (6-3, 240, 4.7) from Evangel Christian Academy in Baton Rouge, La. This heavily recruited defensive end has offers from top programs around the country, but he appears to have narrowed his final list to four schools. Nebraska has made the cut, along with Texas Tech, Mississippi and Stanford.

Bowers had an outstanding junior season, recording 100 tackles and 18 sacks. His performance earned him all-conference and all-state honors. He is also fully qualified academically, with a 19 ACT and 3.8 GPA.

Bowers has a great deal of admiration for the Husker football program and has even gone so far as to arrange

RECRUITING NOTES

A Look at the Top In-State Prospects

By Rick Shaw

The state of Nebraska may see as many as 15 athletes earn Division I football scholarships in 2004.

Here is an early season look at the top five prospects in the state heading into the fall:

1. Cortney Grixby, Cornerback, 5-foot-9, 160 pounds, Omaha (Central) — Rated as the fifth best cornerback in the nation by Rivals.com, Grixby also stars at quarterback for Central High. With a 4.52-second (electronic) 40-yard dash and a 36-inch vertical leap, Grixby brings an impressive set of athletic skills to the field. He holds scholarship offers in football from Nebraska, Iowa, UCLA, Colorado, Iowa State, Kansas, Kansas State and Wyoming. In addition, Grixby is a very good basketball prospect as a point guard. He has scholarship offers in that sport from Cal-Poly, Virginia Tech and Tennessee-Chattanooga.

Grixby attended the Nebraska-Oklahoma State game and will likely be present at many of the Husker home games this fall. He also plans to visit UCLA and Iowa. However, at this stage of the recruiting process, Nebraska appears to be the team to beat.

2. Allan Evridge, Quarterback, 6-1, 205, Papillion/LaVista — Evridge utilizes his 4.5-second speed in the 40 and strong throwing arm to pose a dual threat at quarterback. As a junior, Evridge rushed for 600 yards and passed for another 850 yards. His impressive showings at summer camps earned him early offers from Colorado State, Iowa State, and Kansas State, in addition to Nebraska. Evridge decided to get his decision out of the way early by committing to the Huskers in late June.

3. Andy Christensen, Offensive Guard, 6-3, 275, Bennington — In a year of great line talent in the state, Christensen is considered the best of the bunch. The big man from Bennington combines strength (355-pound bench press) with athleticism (4.98-second 40-yard dash) to make him an imposing force on both sides of the ball. Christensen gained early scholarship offers from Colorado State, Iowa State, and Iowa before committing to the Huskers in late June.

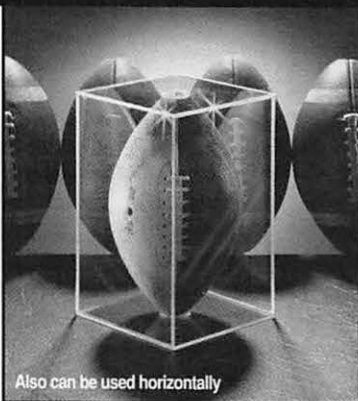
4. Seth Olsen, Offensive Tackle, 6-5, 300, Omaha (Millard North) — At a school that may see as many as six players earn Division I scholarships, Olsen stands out as the top prospect of the group. He is a returning All-State player who helped quarterback John McCardle set a Class A rushing record in 2002 with more than 2,000 yards. Olsen garnered an early scholarship offer from Minnesota, before giving his oral commitment to Nebraska in late July.

5. Brandon Gunn, Running Back, 5-11, 190, Omaha (Central) — The other half of the "Dynamic Duo" at Central3, Gunn looks to better the 980 yards rushing (15 touchdowns) that he amassed as a junior. Gunn is still open to the recruiting process and holds early offers from Iowa, Iowa State, UCLA, Colorado, Kansas, Kansas State and Wyoming, in addition to the Huskers. Gunn said he would likely not make his college decision until sometime after the season.

Honorable Mention — Linebacker Clay Sievers of Elkhorn, Defensive End Ty Steinkuhler of Lincoln (Southwest), Defensive Tackle Zach Copple of Lincoln (Southeast), Cornerback Adam Shada of Omaha (Millard North) and Offensive Guard Mike Huff of Ralston. ■

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his official visit for the weekend of the Kansas State game. He is being recruited by Jamrog and likes what he's heard so far.

"I talked to Coach Jamrog last week, actually," he said. "I got a chance to get to know him. I like their tradition. It's big-time football."

Bowers had an opportunity to take unofficial visits to a number of his favorites over the summer, though he was not able to get to Lincoln. However, he did make it to the campuses of Texas Tech, Stanford, LSU and Texas.

Bowers currently maintains that all of his favorites are equal, and doesn't intend to narrow his list further until taking his official visits. One of those official visits is almost certain to be to Lincoln.

One of the consensus top defensive ends in the nation this year is Rhyen Anderson (6-6, 265, 4.8) from Oak Creek, Wis. Anderson has been contacted by just about every major program and continues to receive additional offers on a daily basis.

In addition to Nebraska, Anderson has been offered by Miami, Oklahoma, Wisconsin, Iowa,

Vanderbilt, USC, Ohio State, Illinois, Colorado and Air Force, among others.

It's easy to see why Anderson is so coveted by top programs, after a junior season that included 91 tackles and 21 sacks. However, Anderson has yet to narrow his focus, and all of the schools previously mentioned are still very much in the running.

"They're all recruiting me about even," he said. "I like the coaches all the same. All the schools are equal, as far as I'm concerned. I'm just looking for a winning team and one of the top programs. I really haven't paid too much attention to college football in the past, but I'm going to watch all the teams this fall."

Anderson has been in contact with the Nebraska staff and still has the Huskers on his list for a possible visit. Although it will be an uphill battle for Nebraska to secure a visit, Anderson is still wide open, and his parents will support whatever decision he makes.

"My parents say I should go wherever makes me happy and not listen to other people," he said. "That's what I'm going to do." ■

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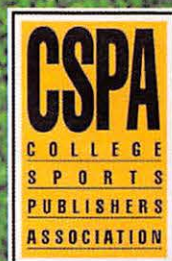
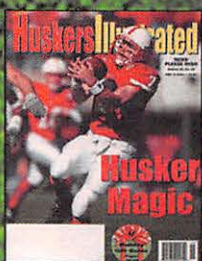
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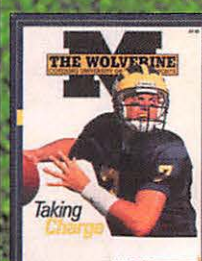
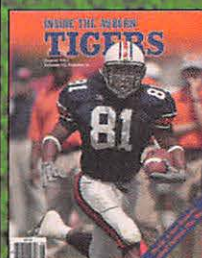
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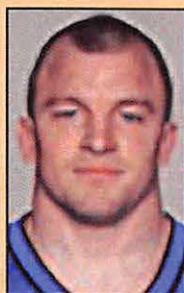
Mike Brown



Ahman Green

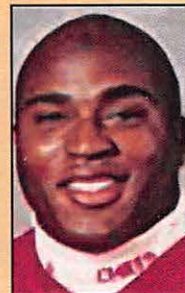


John Parrella



Cory Schlesinger

Player	Pos.	Team	Yr.	No.
Josh Brown	PK	Seattle Seahawks	R	3
Kris Brown	PK	Houston Texas	5	3
Mike Brown	FS	Chicago Bears	4	30
Ralph Brown	CB	New York Giants	4	22
Correll Buckhalter	RB	Philadelphia Eagles	3	28
Keyuo Craver	CB	New Orleans Saints	2	29
Chris Dishman	OG	Arizona Cardinals	7	67
Clint Finley	FS	Kansas City Chiefs	2	38
*Toniou Fonoti	OG	San Diego Chargers	2	71
Jay Foreman	LB	Houston Texans	5	56
Ahman Green	RB	Green Bay Packers	6	30
DeJuan Groce	CB	St. Louis Rams	R	24
#Russ Hochstein	OG	New England Patriots	3	71
Eric Johnson	LB	Oakland Raiders	4	41
Chris Kelsay	DE	Buffalo Bills	R	72
Bill Lafleur	P	San Francisco 49ers	2	4
Mike Minter	SS	Carolina Panthers	7	30
John Parrella	DT	Oakland Raiders	11	97
Carlos Polk	LB	San Diego Chargers	3	52
Dominic Raiola	C	Detroit Lions	3	51
Mike Rucker	DE	Carolina Panthers	5	93
Cory Schlesinger	FB	Detroit Lions	9	30
Scott Shanle	LB	St. Louis Rams	R	90
Will Shields	OG	Kansas City Chiefs	11	68
Erwin Swiney	CB	Green Bay Packers	2	26
Adam Treu	C	Oakland Raiders	7	62
*Kyle Vanden Bosch	DE	Arizona Cardinals	3	93
Eric Warfield	CB	Kansas City Chiefs	6	44
Zach Wiegert	OT	Houston Texans	9	72
Tyrone Williams	CB	Atlanta Falcons	8	37
Grant Wistrom	DE	St. Louis Rams	6	98
*Injured reserve				
#practice squad				



Will Shields



Adam Treu



Eric Warfield



Tyrone Williams



Grant Wistrom

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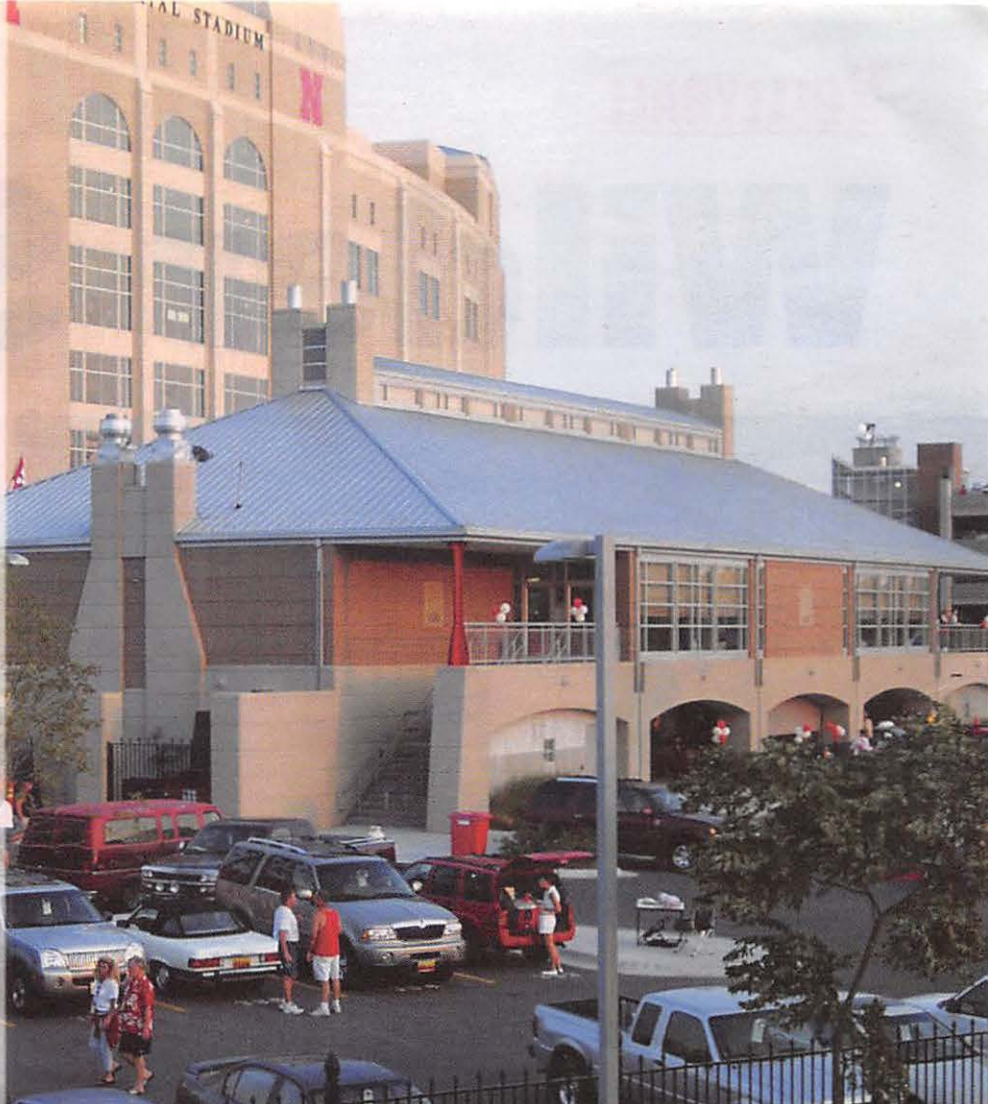
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Wilder Side



***Teammate
says Husker
middle blocker
is 'chomping
at the bit'***

By Todd Henrichs

It's hard to imagine Melissa Elmer, Nebraska's imposing 6-foot-2 middle blocker, as an introvert.

Yet Michelle Lynch says there's a wilder side to Elmer's personality. And as Nebraska's starting setter and Elmer's classmate, Lynch believes it's up to her to bring it out this season.

"She's got this personality that's kind of just quiet, so that when she really hammers the ball, to see her actually get excited and outwardly animated is just awesome," Lynch said. "She's chomping at the bit, and I can't wait to just fish her the fig and let her have her way with it."

In other words, Lynch intends to keep her sophomore middle blocker swinging and smiling this season. And with a big year offensively, it's likely that Elmer could emerge as the next in Nebraska's long line of All-Americans.

Elmer was born in 1983, and in each of her 20 years there's been a Husker on the list of postseason All-Americans. With 22 different athletes sharing 45 All-American awards, Nebraska is at the top of the list as the most honored program in NCAA volleyball history.

But as Nebraska opened its season last month, there was no returning All-American in the lineup. And

Melissa Elmer ranked second in the Big 12 Conference in hitting percentage and blocks per game last season as a redshirt freshman.

with everyone in a new role and the Huskers running a new two-setter system, it was hard to say who the next Husker to see her name on a framed certificate might be.

As one of the Big 12 leaders in hitting percentage and blocks last season, Elmer was a likely candidate. Yet Elmer wasn't even picked to the preseason all-conference team, something head coach John Cook said should motivate his middle blocker this season.

"I challenge myself every day, and every day the coaches are pushing me to be that person," said Elmer, who was recruited out of Northrop High School in Fort Wayne, Ind. "They want to make sure it's in my head that I think I can be that type of player. I think we all should be striving for that same goal."

In her first season of collegiate volleyball, Elmer ranked second in the conference in hitting percentage (.381) and blocks per game (1.30). She averaged 2.31 kills per game and ranked second on the team with 28 service aces a year ago.

Elmer was Nebraska's biggest

impact player, playing in her first NCAA Tournament. She averaged 3.0 kills per game on .413 hitting in the postseason, yet Elmer, like most of the Huskers, struggled mightily in the loss to Hawaii that ended NU's season.

After falling short of the final four, Elmer went right to work in the offseason with her returning teammates to prepare for another run.

Cook said Elmer worked extremely hard, only not at the net.

Swings were off limits in the offseason, allowing Elmer's touchy right shoulder to rest a bit. As Elmer describes it, she has a tear in one of the pieces of cartilage in her rotator cuff, an injury she believes occurred in her redshirt season.

By taking treatments and with a little offseason rest, Elmer hopes she can put off any surgery until her volleyball career is over at Nebraska.

"I think I'll be able to make it through the next few years," she said.

Elmer will carry more of a load

this season, however, as she becomes more of an option offensively. By Nebraska's third match of the new season, Elmer already had notched her career-high with 13 kills against Illinois State.

Elmer, too, averaged 2.4 blocks a game in Nebraska's season-opening tournament. That's a pace that would break the school record at a school known for its blocking prowess at the net.

Middle blockers Amber Holmquist, Jenny Kropp and Megan Korver combined for five All-America awards over Nebraska's last five seasons. Holmquist was honored three times, establishing herself as the best middle blocker in school history.

While equaling her honors will be difficult, filling Holmquist's shoes is not something that will intimidate Elmer. As Lynch might say, Elmer is "chomping at the bit" to see what she can do in the leader's role.

"I think it's going to be a challenge, but it's going to be really exciting, too," Elmer said. "I learned from the best." ■

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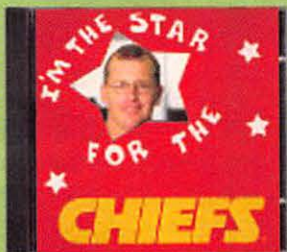
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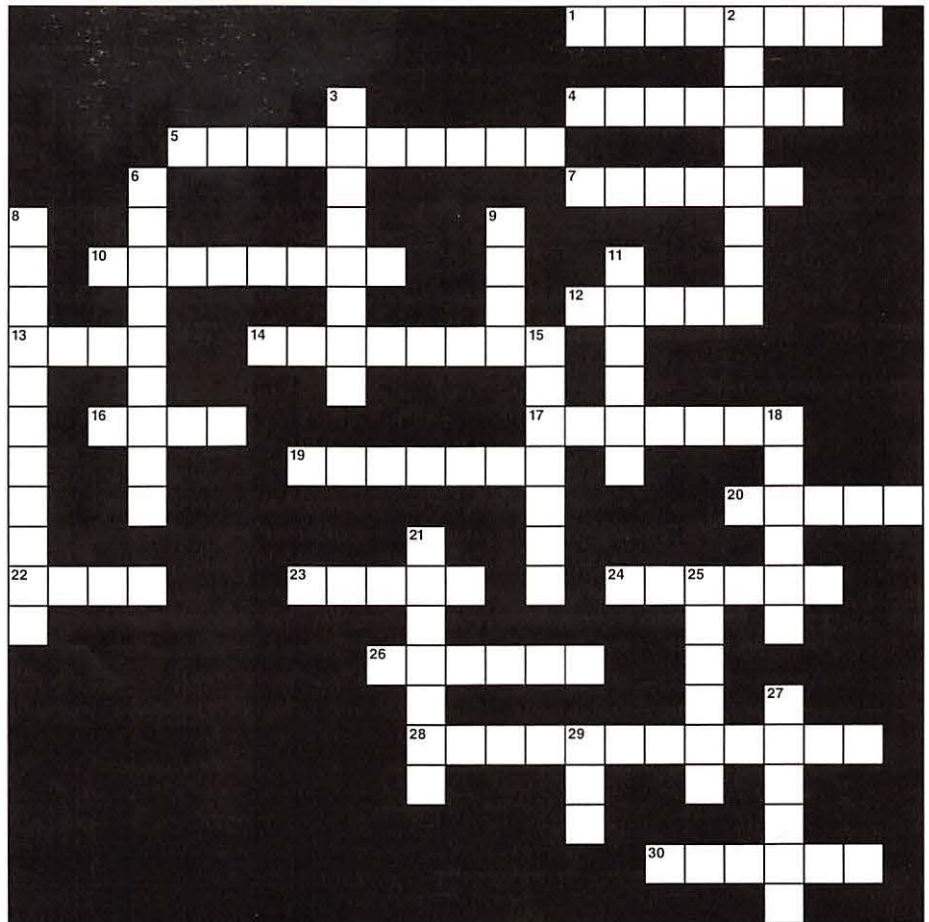
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- 26 NU's defensive coordinator
- 28 Penn State nickname
- 30 NU kicker injured vs. Oklahoma St.

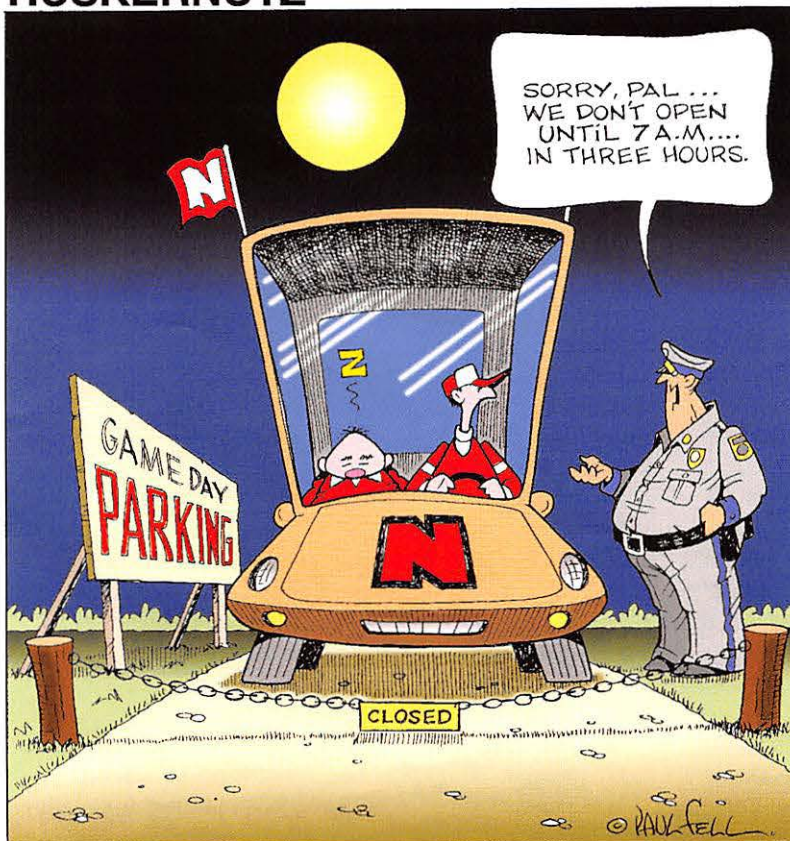
DOWN

- 2 Had 2 interceptions vs. Oklahoma St.
- 3 NU's Oct. 11 opponent
- 6 Memorial Stadium playing surface
- 8 Ex-NU fullback now with Detroit Lions
- 9 NU's assistant head coach
- 11 Scored NU's offensive TD vs. Oklahoma St.
- 15 NU's recruiting coordinator
- 18 NU's No. 5 (defense)
- 21 Penn State head coach
- 25 Ex-NU center now with Detroit Lions
- 27 NU's offensive coordinator
- 29 Network for NU-Penn State game

Answers in Sept. 25 issue



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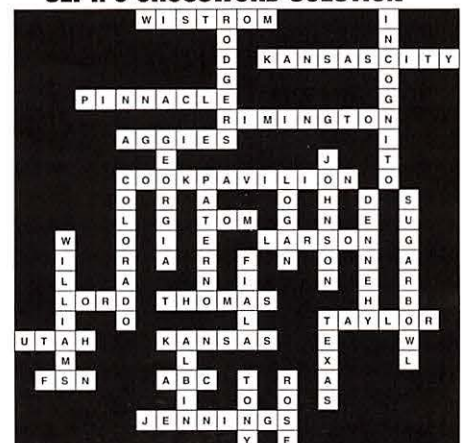
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SEPT. 6 CROSSWORD SOLUTION



A Big Deal?

True freshman Dailey impressive in relief role, but he knows 'Jammal's the starter'



Mike BABCOCK

ON THE THURSDAY before the Utah State game, Frank Solich announced that freshman Joe Dailey had earned the No. 2 quarterback job in competition with junior Mike Stuntz.

After the announcement, reporters sought immediate comment from offensive coordinator Barney Cotton, who seemed surprised at the interest Dailey's promotion elicited. "We're talking about our back-up quarterback," he said. "To me, it's not really that big of a story, is it? Or is it?"

It was, of course. Fans, and even a few reporters, are always susceptible to hyperventilation over young players who are talented but unproven, particularly those at "skill" positions.

The new guy, the unknown quantity, is almost always a favorite.

When he coached the running backs, Solich said, he would put a young I-back into a game after the Cornhuskers had gained control and if the back rushed for a lot of yards, "I'd be getting letters and phone calls and everything else telling me that guy should be starting."

"That's the nature of the game. That's just the way it works."

That's the way it has worked with Dailey. Sight-unseen, he has become the people's choice. He entered the game to chants from the student section of "Dailey, Dailey, Dailey."

And he didn't disappoint. "He put some moves on out there," said Dan Vili Waldrop, a starting offensive tackle who was still in the game when Dailey was taking the snaps.

"I could see why the fans wanted him," Vili Waldrop said.

Lost in Dailey's auspicious debut, however, was the fact that he's still No. 2.

Jammal Lord is "going to be the starter, no matter what," Dailey said afterward. "Everyone has to accept that. I'm still a freshman. I don't have an entire grasp of the game yet."

"Jammal's the starter, and you've got to accept that and be happy."

Dailey's post-game remarks were as impressive as his performance, indicating maturity beyond his 19 years. He didn't see himself at the center of a quarterback controversy.

"I'm going to do what Coach Solich wants, what's best for the team," he said.

Solich wouldn't be drawn into a discussion of where Dailey stood in relation to Lord. "I think Joe had an excellent day for a first time on the field," he said. "It looks like we will have a chance, maybe, to have two quarterbacks that can get some things done. And that's what we're after."

For the record, Dailey entered the game with 3:27 remaining in the third quarter and a 28-7 lead. On his first three snaps, he put the ball in the hands of I-back Cory Ross.

He began his second series with a 13-yard pass to Ross Pilkington, to initiate a nine-play, 47-yard drive to a David Dyches' field goal, the final points of the afternoon.

Dailey would complete another pass to Pilkington on the drive and carry three times, including a 23-yarder that should have answered any questions about his ability to run.

Nebraska's offense is similar to the one he directed for four seasons at St. Peter's Prep in Jersey City, N.J., said Dailey. "So it wasn't really that big of a transition."

Ironically — and much to the chagrin of his detractors, no doubt — Lord has played a role in that transition. "He's been my mentor," Dailey said. "He's been like my older brother, taking care of me. He got me adjusted to the atmosphere out here. I want to take it all in stride."

"We're walking hand-in-hand together, learning together."

Lord, who preceded him in post-game interviews, said much the same thing. "Hey, he's a good guy and hopefully, from now to whenever, he pushes me, I push him, and keep getting better."

Dailey seemed comfortable in front of the room full of cameras and reporters, answering questions with the ease of a veteran and ending on a humorous note.

He was asked if it helped that he had only to hand off to Ross on his first play at Nebraska. Actually, he said, he was "kind of upset" because he had watched Virginia Tech's Marcus Vick in his first game a few days earlier and Vick's first play was a pass.

"I wanted my first play to be a pass as well," he said.

He paused. "But I was happy with it," he added.

You can bet those who have been calling for Dailey were happy, too.

It was that big of a story. And it will continue that way.

He didn't do anything to change that. ■



Joe Dailey was 4-of-5 passing for 47 yards in his debut.

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